



PARKED!

**How Congress' Misplaced Priorities Are
Trashing Our National Treasures**

Senator Tom A. Coburn, M.D.

October 2013

Dear Taxpayer,

Visitors to national parks have been threatened with trespassing charges, obstructed from paying their respects at a memorial to those who lost their lives in service to our country, and turned away from other National Park Service sites closed due to a lack of funding.

All of this began occurring *before* the government shutdown in October.

Perhaps more than any other part of the federal government, our National Park System has become the symbol of Washington, DC dysfunction. These cherished national treasures, which were entrusted to the National Park Service to be preserved and protected, have instead been neglected or abused for political gamesmanship.

Long before the government shutdown and sequestration, congressional shortsightedness and bureaucratic mismanagement were already plaguing our national parks. Barricaded parks across the country exposed the calamity in Washington in 2013, but the National Park System has long been a microcosm of the irresponsible and misplaced priorities within the entire federal budget. Just as important programs like Medicare and Social Security have been raided for decades to pay for politicians' pet projects, Washington has also plundered the National Park Service budget to create new parks and programs with little national significance. And as the lack of budget discipline has driven up the national debt and jeopardized the solvency of retirement programs and our nation's future, the misplaced priorities within the parks budget are endangering the care of the very sites we all revere.

Our elected representatives have been too focused on their own parochial political interests to see the state of disrepair that has befallen some of our greatest national treasures. For example, the National Mall—clearly visible from the Capitol and White House— has become a national disgrace, trampled on and worn out.

Politicians would rather take credit for creating a new park in their community than caring for the parks that already exist. There is, after all, no ribbon cutting ceremony for taking out the trash, fixing a broken railing or filling a pothole.

But failing to conduct maintenance endangers the longevity of our parks and experience of their visitors. Last year alone, the National Park Service delayed more than a quarter billion dollars in much needed maintenance projects, adding to the \$11.5 billion maintenance backlog already threatening the health, safety, and accessibility of park visitors.

The ever growing maintenance cost has not stopped those in Washington from adding new parks, programs, and property to the Park Service. This year, mere days after sequestration supposedly caused the delay in the opening of and shorter hours at

national parks, the President single-handedly established three new National Park units. Likewise, Congress spent \$57 million to purchase more property for the parks—some land for nearly \$1 million per acre. No one would purchase a new car while ignoring a leaking ceiling or broken pipes in their own home, but that is essentially what Washington is doing with our national parks.

The decaying of our National Parks is the physical manifestation of Washington's misplaced priorities. Much like the accrual of our \$17 trillion national debt over time, the build-up of deferred care of national park lands is the direct result of Washington's out-of-control spending addiction that puts off doing what is necessary for doing what is self-serving. Whether it be the uncertainty of future U.S. treasury markets or the tenuous state of a corroded water pipe and an aging utility system, the unsustainable trajectory of deficits and deferrals make it only a matter of time before all will experience failure.

This report, *PARKED! How Congress' Misplaced Priorities Are Trashing Our National Treasures*, exposes how Washington is failing to properly maintain our most enduring and esteemed sites and symbols and where your tax dollars intended for these parks is being spent instead. It also provides commonsense recommendations to ensure that those parks and memorials with true national significance are given the care they deserve so their beauty and significance to our history is preserved for future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Coburn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Tom A. Coburn, M.D.
U.S. Senator

PARKED!

CONTENTS

Parked! Introduction	7
A Brief National Park Service Background	13
How is a National Park Unit Created?.....	13
What’s the Difference between a National Park and a National Monument/Memorial/Historic Site/etc.?.....	16
Chapter I: The Problem – The Indefensible Deferred Maintenance Backlog	17
Chapter II: The Unfocused National Park Service Budget.....	33
Inessential Programs & Activities	36
Everlasting Earmarks: the Heritage Partnership Programs	36
Free Counseling: The Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance Program.....	39
Capital Area Entertainment Subsidies	41
Region Creates Pathway to Federal Funding: Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails.....	43
Get Your Pork Fix on Route 66: Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program	44
Other Frivolous Expenditures	45
Duplicative & Inefficient Programs.....	49
Preserving Parks or Bureaucracy? The \$623 Million Support Apparatus.....	49
Duplicative Designations Increase National Park System Costs.....	58
Overlapping Roles Right Outside Congress’ Windows	61
The Duplicative International Park Affairs program.....	62
Schoolhouse Waste: NPS Education Programs.....	66
Federal Funding Paves the Way for Federal Tax Breaks: National Register of Historic Places.....	67
Lack of Prioritization	71
Piling on over Priorities: Compounding the Problem with More Land Acquisition and Park Studies.....	71
Recreation Fees Need to be Modernized and Prioritized	76
The Administration’s Response: A Call for More Problems than Solutions.....	80
Chapter III: Congress’ Misplaced Priorities Mismange the National Park Service and Threaten Our National Treasures	83
Parks as Pork and Political Power	90
National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978	92

Thomas Stone National Historic Site: Congressman Trades Vote for Burnt Pork.....	96
Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park: Battlefield Approved Before Congress Knew Location	98
Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site: Tell Tale Pork	100
Saint Paul’s Church National Historic Site: Minister Stretches Truth to Attain Park Status and Retain Reputation.....	103
Fort Scott National Historic Site: Politician Helps Fort of “No Historic Significance” Nickel and Dime its Way into the Park System.....	105
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River: The River to Nowhere.....	107
Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve: Area of “Questionable National Significance” Sought Federal Designation to Ward Off Development.....	108
Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park: Congress Established Park after Three Year Study Concludes the Site is Not Suitable, Not Feasible, and Not Nationally Significant...	112
First Ladies National Historic Site: A National Priority or Parochial Pork?.....	114
Steamtown National Historic Site: A \$150 million Theme Park Giveaway	116
Keweenaw National Historical Park: Another Slab of Pork	119
Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial: Few Visitors to Unknown Polish War Hero Flop House	122
Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site: Montana Ranch Heir Retires on Taxpayer Dime.....	124
Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site: Movie Stars Successfully Lobby for Site that Now Has As Many Employees as Daily Visitors	127
Parks That Are Inaccessible to the Public.....	129
Yucca House: Please Close the Gate on Your Way Out.....	129
Fort Bowie National Historic Site: Long Hike to Sparsley Visited Destination	130
Hohokam Pima National Monument: Visiting This Park Could Get You Charged With Trespassing.....	132
Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site: National Park Site Just Blocks from Congress Closed to Public and on the Verge of Collapse.....	134
Isle Royale National Park: Island Site Costs Visitors \$120 for a Ferryboat Ticket and Taxpayers \$260 per Visitor.....	137
Alaska Park Units.....	139
Overseas and International Parks	140
Important Projects, but better ways to give tribute.....	141
Port Chicago Naval Magazine NM: Least Visited Park Unit in the Continental United States is only Accessible Once a Day, Three Times a Week	141
Springfield Armory National Historic Site: Historic Armory Fails to Draw Visitors	143
Kalaupapa National Historic Park: Island Paradise Inaccessible to Most	145
Lacking national significance or authentic historical value.....	148

Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site: Niche Park Serves Narrow Interest.....	148
Charles Pinckney NHS: Site’s Namesake Passed Away Years Before Buildings Were Constructed	150
Weir Farm National Historic Site: Site Honoring American Artist Contains No Pieces of the Artist’s Work.....	151
Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park: “An entirely new kind of park”	153
Women’s Rights National Historic Park: Key Building on the Site “Totally Fabricated” ..	154
Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve: New \$6 million Visitors’ Center has Little Impact on Visitation.....	156
Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site: Site Set for Removal is Rescued by ‘Big Steel’, eventually Dumped onto Taxpayers	158
Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site: Replica Fort May Not Be Historically Accurate	161
PILT and Parks: Congress Lets Communities Have their Cake and Eat it Too	164
Economic Benefits of Status versus Stature.....	165
Presidential Parks	166
Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park	167
Jimmy Carter National Historic Site	168
Harry S Truman National Historic Site.....	169
William Howard Taft National Historic Site.....	169
Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site	171
President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site	172
Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home National Historic Site	173
Decommissioned Parks	176
Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum.....	176
Mar-a-Lago National Historic Site	179
Union Station / National Visitor Center	181
Chapter IV: Recommendations	185
Eliminate The Maintenance Funding Shortfall By Redirecting Lower Priority Spending and Reforming the Recreation Fees Program.....	186
Stemming the Backlog Growth by Closing the \$256 million Annual Funding Shortfall....	186
Make Sensible Reforms to the Recreational Fees Program that Increase Efficiencies While Maintaining Affordability	188
Paying Down the \$11.5 billion Deferred Maintenance Backlog by Reforming the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).....	189
Review Current National Park Units and Consider More Appropriate Plans or Managing Entities	190

New Park Units Must be Self-Sufficient 191
Hold Congress and the Administration Accountable by Committing no Federal Funding
for New Park designations Until the Growth in the Deferred Maintenance Backlog is
Arrested 191

Appendix I: Methodology 193

Appendix II: National Park Units Visitation, Budget, and Subsidy Per Visitor in 2012
..... 194

PARKED! INTRODUCTION

America, the beautiful. From sea to shining sea, the United States is blessed with many of the world's most magnificent natural wonders, which are enduring sources of pride for all Americans. For nearly a century, the National Park Service (NPS) has captured the essence of many of these landmarks as well as the sites honoring some of our most significant historic achievements and tragedies to preserve the beauty, wonder, culture, heritage and history of our land for future generations.

Millions of families from around the world will visit one or more of these parks this year. While all will gaze in awe at the majesty of the Grand Canyon and pause in reflection at the somberness of the battlefields of Gettysburg, many will be inconvenienced by the closures of campgrounds, reduced hours at visitor centers, and piles of trash, unclean restrooms, and delayed repairs at many parks.

Such unsightly conditions are being blamed on recent budget reductions, but these problems had been piling up long before sequestration. The total cost of deferred maintenance within the National Park Service (NPS) is \$11.5 billion.¹ “The unfunded to-do list includes repairing or replacing deteriorated roads, bridges and trails, as well as upkeep on facilities and historical sites.”² The price tag of this backlog has more than doubled over the past decade, not so much due to a lack of funds as much as a lack of priorities set by Congress. Instead of addressing the urgent needs of our premier parks and memorials, Congress has instead focused on establishing new parks and diverting funds to local sites that are not even part of any national park.³ With each new park and program diluting limited resources, Congress has been effectively sequestering our national parks for decades. As a result, NPS is now being asked to do more with less.

Perhaps nothing better demonstrates how Congress' preoccupation with parochial interests has left our nation's true treasures neglected than the sorry state of the National Mall, on which many of our nation's best known symbols, memorials, museums, and institutions sit. The National Mall, which is finally getting the renovation it needed and deserves, had become a national disgrace with crumbling sidewalks, trampled on and worn out grass, uncollected garbage, and monuments in disrepair.⁴ Even though the Capitol faces the Mall and members of Congress need only look out their windows to see what disrepair it had fallen into, an analysis completed by the

¹ Testimony of Jonathan Jarvis, Director of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Concerning Federal Agency Sequestration Planning and Implementation, April 16, 2013; <http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Jarvis-Testimony.pdf>.

² “Federal budget cuts are killing nation's ‘best idea,’” Reno Gazette Journal, June 19, 2013; <http://www.rgj.com/article/20130620/OPED01/306200030/Federal-budget-cuts-killing-nation-s-best-idea->.

³ Brian Westley and Brett Zongker, “National Mall sinks into disrepair while funds go elsewhere; Popular national park crumbling, victim of neglect,” Associated Press, July 26, 2009; http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2009/07/26/national_mall_sinks_into_disrepair_while_funds_go_els_ewhere/.

⁴ Dale McFeatters, “National Mall, a treasure, shows wear and tear,” The Eagle-Tribune, July 16, 2013; <http://www.eagletribune.com/opinion/x2040126385/National-Mall-a-treasure-shows-wear-and-tear>.

Associated Press in 2009 found the Mall “has been at a disadvantage in competing for extra funds doled out by lawmakers, compared with sites that are represented by powerful members of Congress.”⁵

Now some members of Congress are proposing the creation of a national park on the moon! The legislation would require the park to be established within a year even though no one has walked on the moon in 40 years and it could be decades before anyone does so again.⁶

This spaced out proposal is just another example of how Congress has turned the National Park Service into its own national “pork” service, with Washington politicians earmarking new parks for purely political and parochial purposes rather than taking care of the national treasures that are already part of the park system.

Every new site added to the National Park Service further divides the \$3 billion park budget, which currently provides for 401 park units, 27,000 historic structures, 2,461 national historic landmarks, 582 national natural landmarks, 49 national heritage areas, and over 84 million acres of land. Yet, barely half of the National Park Service annual budget goes to the actual park units, with much instead diverted to sustain an expansive bureaucracy or to various programs that often duplicate the goals of other federal agencies. The 25 most popular parks consume just a little over 10 percent of the National Park Service’s annual budget. The impact of this division is obvious.

This report exposes misplaced congressional priorities that ignore and often threaten the real and immediate needs of our most cherished national parks and monuments. For decades, the inability to address the maintenance needs in the National Park System has been recognized by Congress, administrations from both political parties, and all interested stakeholders as a problem that needs to be corrected. The catch is that repairing a roof, replacing a corroding water pipe or filling a pothole does not garner politically advantageous headlines or public attention. This year alone, maintenance work will be underfunded by more than **a quarter of a billion dollars**, all which will be tacked onto the swelling deferred maintenance backlog. A former House Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman charged with funding the Park Service diagnosed the reason behind this shortfall is that “it’s not very sexy to fix a sewer system or maintain a trail. You don’t get headlines for that. It would be nice to get them more money, but we’re constrained.”

⁵ Brian Westley and Brett Zongker, “National Mall sinks into disrepair while funds go elsewhere; Popular national park crumbling, victim of neglect,” Associated Press, July 26, 2009; http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2009/07/26/national_mall_sinks_into_disrepair_while_funds_go_elsewhere/.

⁶ H.R. 2617, Apollo Lunar Landing Legacy Act, U.S. House of Representatives, 113th Congress, July 8, 2013; <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c113:H.R.2617>.

While performing maintenance may not retrieve headlines, deferring needed projects have real ramifications on NPS visitors' health, safety, and park accessibility. Frequent ruptures of a corroded water pipeline at Grand Canyon National Park require creek water to be used to flush toilets. A leaky water system in Yellowstone National Park threatens the health of visitors and employees while tripping hazards created by dilapidated sidewalks at Independence Hall National Historical Park cause up to \$2 million per year in tort claims. Lassen Volcanoes National Park racked up 2,500 hours in emergency labor in a single year for repairs on its 80-year-old utility system while an elevator at Mammoth Caves National Park has been broken for more than a decade, rendering the cave inaccessible for disabled visitors. These are just a few of the consequences of negligent budgeting practiced by Congress.

As the visitors' NPS experience is threatened by the deterioration of facilities caused by chronic maintenance funding shortfalls, NPS resources are instead directed towards a multitude of activities that are inessential to the NPS mission, inefficient or duplicative of other federal programs, or fail to rise to the level of importance to compete with more pressing needs. **The NPS is subsidizing Washington DC area concerts, preserving parks in foreign countries, and purchasing even more park property – including real estate on the U.S. Virgin Islands for nearly one million dollars per acre.** At the same time, the crowned jewels of our National Park System have become tarnished.

This report also looks at how politicians have used the parks for self-serving political purposes to grease the legislative process, as gifts, and even to intimidate opponents. A park in Maryland, for example, was established in the district of a member of Congress whose vote was needed on a larger bill. Another congressman created a park in his district in Ohio as a gift to his wife. And a chairman of the House Parks Subcommittee once threatened to turn another member's entire district into a national park to prove his political power.

Americans treasure our parks too much to allow them to become rewards and punishments for Washington politicians.

This year, visitors to some parks “may notice delayed road and park openings, reduced hours of operation, fewer program offerings and longer wait times at entrance stations.”⁷ A year ago it took about 15 minutes to drive through the South Rim entrance of the Grand Canyon. Today it can take up to an hour.⁸ The superintendent at Grand

⁷ Christopher Dawson, “7 ways budget cuts will hit national parks,” CNN, May 20, 2013; <http://www.cnn.com/2013/05/17/travel/national-parks-budget-cuts>.

⁸ Brandon Loomis, “Cuts lead to longer lines at Grand Canyon, fewer rangers,” The Republic, June 16, 2013; <http://www.azcentral.com/travel/articles/20130616budget-cuts-grand-canyon.html>.

Teton National Park warns visitors “we know there will be delays in responding to search and rescue, as well as medical emergencies and law enforcement.”⁹

Meanwhile, **more than 70 national park units attract fewer than 100 daily visitors.** There are more employees at the Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site than visitors on a given day.¹⁰ The staff of the Arkansas Post National Memorial say “we try everything we know” but still have little luck attracting many people to the site, noting the occasional visitors to the area “have to be lost, or coming here.”¹¹ And when someone shows up at the Thomas Stone National Historic Park site in Maryland, the ranger says, “I hope it’s not UPS again.”¹² No one is even permitted to visit Hohokam Pima National Monument, and according to its own website, “attempting to go to the site is trespassing.”¹³

This year, over 9 million people will hike in the Great Smoky Mountains, but more Americans will be struck by lightning than visit Aniakchak National Monument.¹⁴

More than two million will travel to South Dakota to Mount Rushmore National Memorial, but how many have ever visited the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial, or know where it is located, or even know anything about the man who it honors?¹⁵

More than one million people have already visited Yellowstone in the first half of this year, before the park’s busiest season even began.¹⁶ Meanwhile, “the staff far outnumber the visitors” at Steamtown National Historic Site many days and there has been a “steady decline” in visitors there since the site was opened in 1995.¹⁷

To ensure access to and proper care of our important natural landmarks and historic and cultural sites, we must stop diluting the already shrinking parks budget with the addition of more obscure or rarely visited sites. This means re-evaluating the status of many existing park units and setting clear criteria that proposed additions to the park service must meet aside from the whims of an influential politician or interest group.

⁹ Kurt Repanshek, “Cuts To Grand Teton National Park’s Staff Will Delay Emergency Response, Close Some Facilities,” National Parks Traveler, March 26, 2013; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2013/03/cuts-grand-teton-national-parks-staff-will-delay-emergency-response-close-some-facilities22983>.

¹⁰ There were 2,815 visitors to the Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site in 2012, or nearly 8 visitors a day, compared to 9 full time employees, according to National Park Service statistics.

¹¹ Jesse McKinley, “Commemorating Those Lost Through Time,” The New York Times, August 27, 2011; <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/28/us/28memorial.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>.

¹² David A. Fahrenthold, “Humble Md. Park Typifies Shift from Scenic to Cerebral; National System ‘Uniquely American,’ Unevenly Attended,” The Washington Post, page A1, September 26, 2009.

¹³ “Hohokam Pima National Monument,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/pima/index.htm>.

¹⁴ Over 1,000 people are struck by lightning every year in the United States (HowStuffWorks, a subsidiary of Discovery Communications, <http://science.howstuffworks.com/nature/climate-weather/storms/question681.htm>). A total of 19 people visited the Aniakchak National Monument in 2012, according to National Park Service statistics.)

¹⁵ Thaddeus Nicodemus National Memorial is located in Philadelphia Pennsylvania, and had 3, 313 visitors in 2012, according to National Park Service statistics.

¹⁶ Ruffin Prevost, “Yellowstone visitation tops 1 million by end of June,” Yellowstone Gate, July 10, 2013; <http://www.yellowstonegate.com/2013/07/yellowstone-visitation-tops-1-million-by-end-of-june/>.

¹⁷ David Singleton, “Steamtown Derailed,” The Scranton Times - Tribune, page A1, September 14, 2008.

While every community shares in the collective American tale, not every local hero, event, or natural wonder can or should be commemorated as part of the National Park System. These should be reserved for the greatest symbols and events—from tragedies to triumphs—that together form who we are as a nation.

Just because a memorial or park is not well known or widely visited certainly does not mean it is not important or has no value. Likewise, just because Congress creates a national park, that does not mean the site will be visited or is of great significance to our national story. There are millions of individuals who have contributed to our heritage throughout the ages and countless sites that represent our natural wonder. Our national parks should highlight the truly greatest of these.

In a letter guiding the expansion of the park system, the first director of the Park Service wrote, “In studying new park projects, you should seek to find scenery of supreme and distinctive quality or some natural feature so extraordinary or unique as to be of national interest and importance...**The national park system as now constituted should not be lowered in standard, dignity, and prestige by the inclusion of areas which express in less than the highest terms the particular class or kind of exhibit which they represent**[*emphasis added*].”¹⁸

This report, *PARKED! How Congress’ Misplaced Priorities Are Trashing Our National Treasures*, includes a tour of the lesser known and rarely visited national parks, which you most likely never heard of and probably did not visit on your summer vacation. Nearly all are interesting places or honor important moments or people, but they may not meet the criteria of a national park outlined by the first parks director or the expectations of you, the taxpayer.

The parks in question examined in this report are divided into four categories

- 1) Political or special interest rather than national importance;
- 2) Inaccessible to the public;
- 3) Important but would be better honored in a different capacity; and
- 4) Lacking national significance or authentic historical value.

As you review each, ask yourself if it makes more sense to direct limited resources to preserving, protecting and improving access to sites of true national significance such as the Statue of Liberty or the Flight 93 National Memorial, or should we continue to make these national symbols and landmarks compete for funding with these lesser known and

¹⁸ “THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: A Brief History,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/hisnps/npshistory/npshisto.htm>.

rarely visited sites. This report provides the facts you need to know to make an informed decision as to whether a site should be added, or even removed, from the National Park System.

Additionally, this report illuminates the entirety of the NPS budget, contrasting the problems incurred by years of deferring maintenance projects with the expansion of expenditures on items that are inessential, duplicative, or simply not a priority. You can question how the NPS can carve out funding to sponsor auto shows and wine trains while it cannot find the resources to perform basic annual maintenance tasks. Perhaps there is no greater example of misplaced priorities than the federal government purchasing more land every year while failing to maintain the property it already owns.

The current path of adding more parks, property, and projects to NPS by Congress and the administration is unsustainable. Yet, neither Congress nor the administration has proposed a plan to reverse the current course in order to preserve and protect our prized possessions for this generation and many more to come. This report intends to fill that void with tangible proposals that will unlock the resources necessary to finally address the deferred maintenance backlog and restore our National Park System to the quality that the American people expect and deserve.

With the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service approaching in 2016, this is the ideal time to reaffirm our commitment to the most iconic and enduring symbols of our heritage and American pride.

A BRIEF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BACKGROUND

The National Park Service (NPS) was created in 1916 when President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act into law. The Organic Act described the National Park Service's purpose as to "promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments and reservations... [to] conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."¹⁹

Originally composed of 35 park units, the NPS's responsibilities has since expanded to 401 park units covering over 84 million acres of land in all 50 states, Washington DC, four U.S. territories, and even Canada. In addition, NPS oversees 27,000 historic structures, 2,461 national historic landmarks, 582 national natural landmarks, 49 national heritage areas, 58 Wild and Scenic Rivers, 24 national trails, 9 affiliated areas, and 15 partner organizations.²⁰



Yellowstone became the Nation's first national park in 1872.

HOW IS A NATIONAL PARK UNIT CREATED?

A national park unit can be created in one of two ways: an act of Congress or a presidential proclamation under the power of the 1906 Antiquities Act. Of the 401 park units in the National Park Service, Congress established 306.²¹

¹⁹ Larry M., Dilsaver, "America's National Park System: The Critical Documents," Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1994; http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/anps/anps_i.htm.

²⁰ "About Us," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/index.htm>.

²¹ "Antiquities Act 1906-2006 maps, facts, & figures: monuments list," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/antiquities/MonumentsList.htm>.

Several actions generally occur prior to Congress authorizing the addition of a national park unit. At the beginning of each year, the Secretary of the Interior submits a list of recommended areas for study to Congress, based on significance, unrepresented themes, and “popular demand.”²² These sites typically come from either local interests or from locations already designated on the Registry of National Landmarks or the National Register of Historic Places. Over the last 12 years, the annual submission list has only been provided once, due to the administration prioritizing funds towards the backlog of Special Resource Studies already authorized by Congress.²³

Congress can authorize a Special Resource Study on the potential inclusion of an area to the National Park System, although completion of a study is not required prior to a park’s addition. Once a Special Resource Study is authorized, NPS assesses a candidate area’s national significance, suitability, and feasibility for addition to the National Park System. These studies take an average of 4.5 years and cost in the range of \$150,000 to \$500,000 per study.²⁴ As of June 2012, the National Park Service had 36 pending Special Resource Studies, 10 pending reconnaissance studies, while having 7 Special Resource Studies completed and 6 reconnaissance studies completed.²⁵ The fiscal year 2012 budget included \$2.4 million and 15 full time employees to support the Special Resource Studies.²⁶

Congress can utilize the Special Resource Studies and the recommendations they provide for the candidate area’s significance, suitability, and feasibility as a guide for authorizing new park units. However, Congress does not always follow the recommendations provided by these studies and often authorizes new park units without the support or completion of a study by the National Park Service. For example, Congress authorized the Paterson Great Falls National Historic Site in 2009 despite the Special Resource Study conclusion that the site failed to meet any of the criteria for NPS management. Within the same 2009 bill, Congress also approved the River Raisin National Battlefield Park and the President W.J. Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site prior to completion of their Special Resource Studies.^{27 28}

The other way national park units are established is by a presidential proclamation to designate a national monument on federal lands. This authority comes from the Antiquities Act of 1906, which allows the President to establish a national monument on “historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or

²² Carol Hardy Vincent, “National Park System: Establishing New Units,” Congressional Research Service, April 25, 2013.

²³ Carol Hardy Vincent, “National Park System: Establishing New Units,” Congressional Research Service, April 25, 2013.

²⁴ Carol Hardy Vincent, “National Park System: Establishing New Units,” Congressional Research Service, April 25, 2013.

²⁵ Phone interview with Congressional Research Service, June 2012.

²⁶ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013;

http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

²⁷ “River Raisin Battlefield Special Resource Study,” National Park Service website, accessed September 5, 2013;

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=22675>.

²⁸ Senate Report 110-011

scientific interest."²⁹ This law has been used to establish 95 park units, including the five most recent additions to the system. Since 1906, 15 presidents have used the Antiquities Act to establish a National Monument.³⁰ President Jimmy Carter created 15 national monuments in Alaska on December 1, 1978 using the Antiquities Act.³¹ The current administration has unilaterally authorized five park units using its executive power.

President	Total National Monuments	Acres
T. Roosevelt	18	1,530,934
W. Taft	10	31,700.49
W. Wilson	13	1,122,923
W. Harding	10	13,365
C. Coolidge	11	1,449,887
H. Hoover	9	1,361,805
F. Roosevelt	11	1,050,909
H. Truman	1	1,000.00
D. Eisenhower	2	5,265.45
J. Kennedy	2	1,160.45
L. Johnson	1	32,546.69
R. Nixon	0	0
G. Ford	0	0
J. Carter	15	54,125,000
R. Reagan	0	0
G. H. W. Bush	0	0
W. Clinton	19	5,031,391
G.W. Bush	2	140,000
B. Obama	5	???

²⁹ Carol Hardy Vincent, "National Monuments and the Antiquities Act," Congressional Research Service, May 13, 2013.

³⁰ "Antiquities Act 1906-2006 maps, facts, & figures: monuments list," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/antiquities/MonumentsList.htm>. Only President's Nixon, Ford, Reagan and George H.W. Bush did not use the Antiquities Act to establish a National Monument.

³¹ With his executive power alone, he was able to withdraw an area the size of Utah without the consent of Congress. "Antiquities Act 1906-2006 maps, facts, & figures: monuments list," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/archeology/sites/antiquities/MonumentsList.htm>.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A NATIONAL PARK AND A NATIONAL MONUMENT/MEMORIAL/HISTORIC SITE/ETC.?

The National Park System consists of 401 park units of varying types, which serve as “the basic management entity of the National Park Service.”³² There are 59 national parks, which are considered the most significant parks or colloquially as the “crown jewels.” In addition to the national parks, there are 78 national historic sites, 85 national monuments, 46 national historic parks, 29 national memorials, 18 national recreation areas, 18 national preserves, 16 national scenic rivers or trails, 15 national battlefields, 10 national seashores, 9 national military parks, 5 national parkways, 4 national lakeshores, international historic sites, and several other unique designations including the White House.

The nomenclature used for various parks has some descriptive significance. For example, a historic site features historic buildings, while a national recreation area offers outdoor recreational opportunities. The title can also indicate the size of the park. For instance, a historic site signifies a single building whereas an historic park has multiple structures. However, all of the park units are governed by the same laws, regulations, and policies that apply to the National Park System.



³² “Organization,” National Park Service website, accessed July 31, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/organization.htm>.

CHAPTER I: THE PROBLEM – THE INDEFENSIBLE DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG



A LOCAL RESIDENT TOOK THIS PHOTO OF PROPERTY OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IN THE GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA TO “EMPHASIZE THE POINT THAT THE AREA IS NOT VERY WELL TAKEN CARE OF.”³³

The impacts of funding non-core programs and adding low-priority projects to the National Park System can be summarized in a single statistic – the National Park Service’s staggering \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog.³⁴ The multibillion figure is the investment needed to repair NPS assets and is the symbol of congressional negligence of America’s true parks and treasures. For decades, the backlog has been readily identified by Congress, multiple administrations, and all other interested stakeholders as an important problem that needs attention. The catch is that “it’s not very sexy to fix a sewer system or maintain a trail. You don’t get headlines for that. It would be nice to get them more money, but we’re constrained,” according to a former House Appropriation Chairman who oversaw the parks budget.³⁵ The deferred maintenance backlog is an issue that Congress promises to address as soon as the next

³³ “Beach Channel Drive Entrance To Marine Parkway Bridge In Disrepair,” The Wave, July 27, 2012;

http://www.rockawave.com/news/2012-07-27/Community/Beach_Channel_Drive_Entrance_To_Marine_Parkway_Bri.html.

³⁴ Provided by Congressional Research Service to the Office of Senator Coburn, April 6, 2012.

³⁵ Michael Janofsky, “National Parks, Strained by Record Crowds, Face a Crisis,” The New York Times, July 25, 1999

park is approved and the next press conference is held celebrating a new park unit in a lawmaker's district – but then never does.

As will be seen in this section, not only does the decision to ignore the backlog detract from visitors' experience, erode our historical keepsakes, and prohibit access to entire areas of National Park units, it can also pose real dangers to park visitors and staff.

For decades, administrations from both parties have acknowledged the underfunding for maintenance of existing assets and the deteriorating status of the National Park System. Instead of addressing this issue by figuring out how to prioritize resources through the park service budget, along with new sources of money, Congress and multiple administrations have combined forces to exacerbate the problem by piling on new projects that the park service will never be able to afford.



MANY OF THE BUILDINGS WITHIN THE WRANGELL-ST. ELIAS NATIONAL PARK IN ALASKA HAVE BEEN ABANDONED FOR MORE THAN 60 YEARS AND ARE CRUMBLING, DETERIORATING AND DANGEROUS.³⁶

In a 1997 document, “Preserving Historic Structures in the National Park System: A Report to the President,” the National Park Service stated, “Based on identified maintenance, rehabilitation, and development needs, the **NPS does not have and never has had enough funds or staff to care for all resources in its custody.** Contributing to the fundamental problem are unrealistic expectations reflected in and furthered by park planning documents, an overwhelming deferred maintenance workload, and a lack of multidisciplinary focus to set and achieve realistic goals in cooperative efforts recognizing the value of all aspects of park operations [emphasis added].”³⁷ Since 1997, Congress and multiple administrations have compounded this

³⁶ “Kennecott,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/wrst/historyculture/kennecott.htm> .

³⁷ “Preservation Maintenance in the National Parks: A Guide to NPS Options and Policies,” National Parks Conservation Association, October 2012; <http://www.npca.org/about-us/center-for-park-research/historic-preservation/Final-HP-report-with-HAVO.pdf>

problem, adding 26 more park units despite the warning from NPS that it lacks the ability to maintain its current projects.³⁸

In a 2001 speech at Everglades National Park, President George W. Bush declared, “Many parks have lacked the resources they need for their basic care and maintenance. My administration will restore and renew America’s national parks.”³⁹ Since the President’s speech, the National Park Service’s deferred maintenance backlog has more than doubled from \$5.5 billion to \$11.5 billion.⁴⁰



SINCE 2001 WHEN THEN-PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH DECLARED, “MANY PARKS HAVE LACKED THE RESOURCES THEY NEED FOR THEIR BASIC CARE AND MAINTENANCE,” THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE’S DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED FROM \$5.5 BILLION TO \$11.5 BILLION.

The FY2010 National Park Service Budget Justification submitted by President Obama recommitted to taking care of existing resources, stating, “the Department intends to focus its attention and resources on taking care of existing responsibilities, such as addressing facility maintenance needs, rather than continuing the rapid expansion of new NPS responsibilities.” Yet, **since FY2010**, the same administration has expanded the park service’s responsibilities by **adding five new park units** using the unilateral executive power to create national monuments provided to the president by the Antiquities Act.

In April 2013, the current administration made a similar public acknowledgement of the problems facing the National Park System. The administration stated: “Because of the age of existing NPS assets, the capital construction backlog of the Service continues to rapidly expand beyond the capabilities of the Service to keep up with known major

³⁸ “National Park System Areas Listed in Chronological Order of Date Authorized Under DOI,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/applications/budget2/documents/chronop.pdf>

³⁹ “The Burgeoning Backlog: A Report on the Maintenance Backlog in America’s National Parks,” National Parks Conservation Association, May 2004; <http://www.npca.org/assets/pdf/backlog.pdf>

⁴⁰ Provided by Congressional Research Service to the Office of Senator Coburn, April 6, 2012.

repair or rehabilitation needs.”⁴¹ Within the same month of reconfirming that the Park Service does not have the capabilities to handle its current obligations, the Administration increased the burden of the backlog by adding new parks units to the already taxed system. Using the Antiquities Act, President Obama established three new National Park units, including a unit in the Vice President’s home state.⁴²



THE VERY SAME MONTH THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ACKNOWLEDGED THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DID NOT HAVE THE ASSETS OR CAPABILITY TO KEEP UP WITH THE MAJOR REPAIR OR REHABILITATION NEEDS OF THE PARKS, THE ADMINISTRATION CREATED THREE NEW PARK UNITS, INCLUDING ONE IN THE HOME STATE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT.

Despite decades of promises to fix our parks, Congress has made the steady growth of the deferred maintenance backlog a permanent feature of the National Park System. In FY2012, the National Park Service directed \$444 million to address deferred maintenance projects.⁴³ According to the National Park Service, it takes \$700 million annually just to hold the current backlog steady at \$11.5 billion.⁴⁴ This locks in more than a **quarter billion dollar** annual growth rate in the deferred maintenance backlog, surrendering any chance of restoring our National Park System to an adequate level of maintenance.

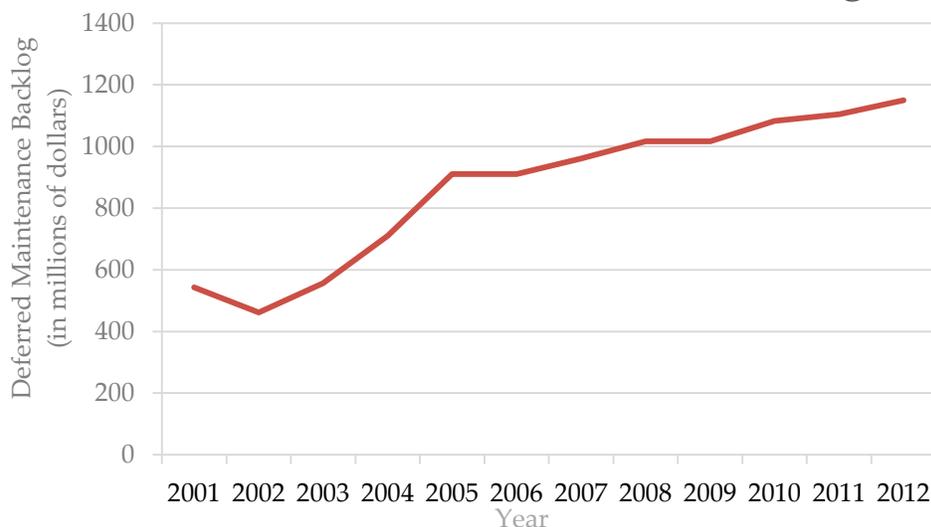
⁴¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁴² Email from National Park Service to the office of Senator Tom Coburn, March 27, 2013.

⁴³ Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for an oversight hearing to consider supplemental funding options to support the National Park Service’s Efforts to address deferred maintenance and operational needs, July 25, 2013; http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6d4ed073-b1f5-42cf-a61a-122be71e67b9.

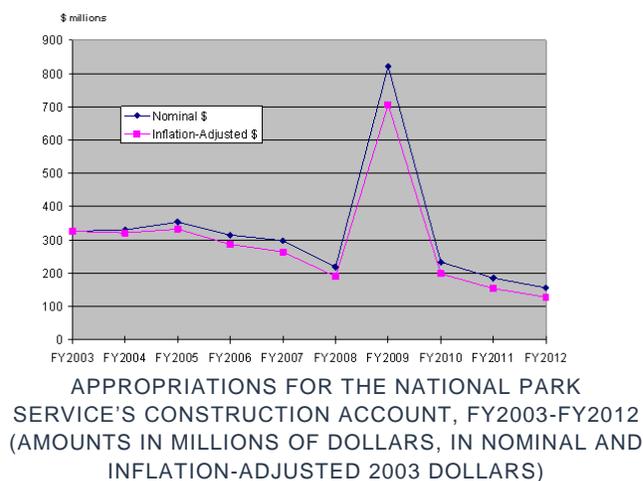
⁴⁴ Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for an oversight hearing to consider supplemental funding options to support the National Park Service’s Efforts to address deferred maintenance and operational needs, July 25, 2013; http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6d4ed073-b1f5-42cf-a61a-122be71e67b9.

National Park Service Deferred Maintenance Backlog



THE OTHER “GRAND CANYON” WITHIN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: THE COST OF THE DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED FROM \$5.5 BILLION TO \$11.5 BILLION OVER THE PAST DECADE.

The lack of congressional priorities can be clearly seen when examining the construction program budget, which is partially used to fund deferred maintenance projects and has been cut in half over the last decade.⁴⁵ The line-item construction budget is responsible for funding some of the most critical rehabilitation and replacement of facilities in the National Park System. Arguably the most important portion of the National Park Service budget has been continually reduced – the funding in FY2012 was \$77 million, its lowest level since 1988.⁴⁶



The deferral of maintenance work is a compounding problem. The longer needed repairs are delayed, the more expensive the work becomes. For example, several studies have found, “a dollar spent on pavement preservation can save between \$6 and \$10 in

⁴⁵ Lara B. Comay, “National Park Service: Recent Appropriations Trends,” Congressional Research Service, September 24, 2012.

⁴⁶ Email from the National Park Service to the Office of Tom Coburn, January 15, 2013.

future pavement rehabilitation costs.”⁴⁷ The National Park Service further extols the benefits of timely maintenance, stating, “reconstruction and replacement of roads can be more than five times as costly as pavement resurfacing treatments.... Less expensive treatments can be completed in shorter periods, often allowing visitor traffic back onto a roadway in a shorter period of time and lessening the economic impacts to businesses in neighboring gateway communities.”⁴⁸ Despite these analyses, “NPS estimates that it requires \$412 million annually to keep all its roads in good condition, while it is currently spending only about \$240 million per year.”⁴⁹ As a result, the NPS contains \$3.3 billion in high-priority maintenance on park service roads.⁵⁰



49 PERCENT OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AND 48 PERCENT OF THE ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM ARE IN LESS THAN “GOOD” CONDITION.

Of the 27,000 historic buildings in the National Park System, more than 60 percent are in need of repair. The National Park Service finds more than 10,000 historic structures are in “fair” or “poor” condition, while 49 percent of its 678 cultural landscapes and 48 percent of its 74,662 archeological sites are in less than “good” condition.⁵¹

The deteriorating condition of our National Park System is not lost on the American people. According to a survey, only 6 percent of voters believed that the national parks are in good shape, while 71 percent voted that the National Park Service faces “minor” or “serious” problems.⁵² Of the subsection of survey participants that knew “a great deal or

⁴⁷ “Payment Preservation in our National Parks,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013;

http://www.nps.gov/transportation/factsheets/pavement_preservation_20110321.pdf.

⁴⁸ “Transportation Asset Management,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013;

http://www.nps.gov/transportation/factsheets/asset_management_20090624.pdf.

⁴⁹ “Transportation Asset Management,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013;

http://www.nps.gov/transportation/factsheets/asset_management_20090624.pdf.

⁵⁰ Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for an oversight hearing to consider supplemental funding options to support the National Park Service’s Efforts to address deferred maintenance and operational needs, July 25, 2013;

http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6d4ed073-b1f5-42cf-a61a-122be71e67b9.

⁵¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013;

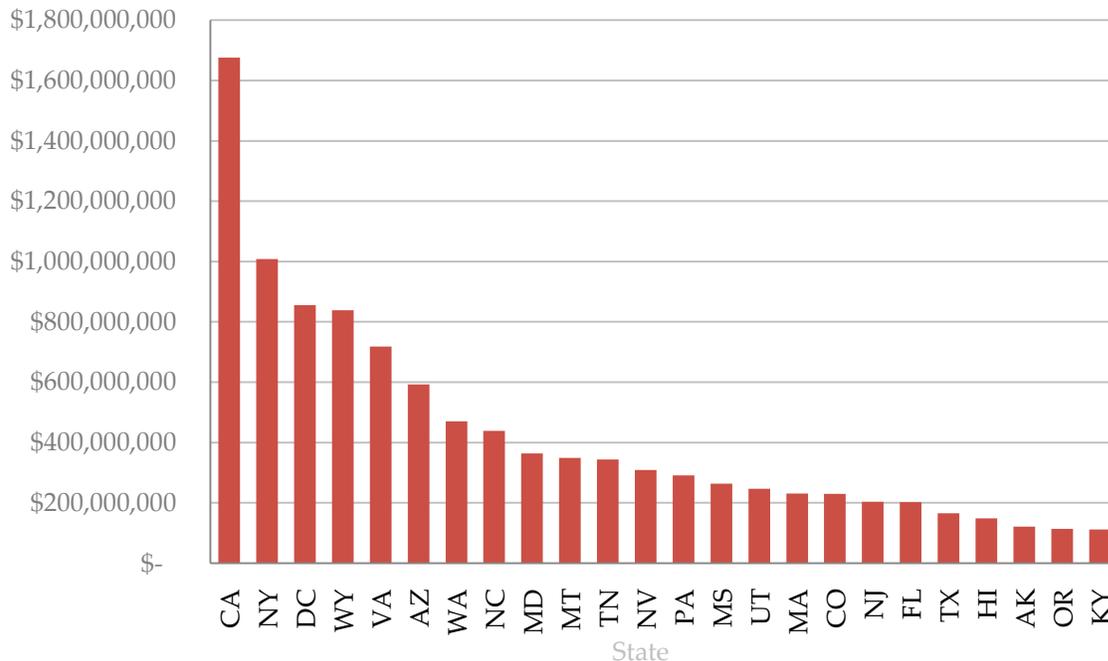
http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵² “Strong Bipartisan Support for National Parks: Findings From A National Survey Conducted On Behalf Of The National Parks Conservation Association and National Park Hospitality Association,” National Parks Conservation Association, July 2012;

http://www.npca.org/assets/pdf/Survey_Findings_Memo_Final.pdf.

quite a bit about National Park issues,” exactly half of the respondents stated the National Parks “face serious problems.”⁵³

Total 2012 Deferred Maintenance Backlog



THE NATIONAL PARKS WITHIN 24 STATES HAVE MORE THAN \$100 MILLION IN DEFERRED MAINTENANCE.

Some of the most visited and important sites in our National Park System are also some of the most neglected. The top 10 most visited park units in 2012 had a deferred maintenance backlog of \$2.6 billion, accounting for more than 20 percent of the total backlog in the entire National Park System.⁵⁴ In 2012, the 59 national parks representing the “crown jewels” of the National Park System hosted 65 million visitors and had a combined deferred maintenance backlog of nearly \$5 billion.⁵⁵ Yosemite and Yellowstone National Parks combine to \$1 billion in deferred repairs alone⁵⁶, while Washington DC’s National Mall and Memorial Parks’ deferred maintenance backlog stood at \$530 million as of 2012.⁵⁷



⁵³ “Strong Bipartisan Support for National Parks: Findings From A National Survey Conducted On Behalf Of The National Parks Conservation Association and National Park Hospitality Association” National Parks Conservation Association, July 2012; http://www.npca.org/assets/pdf/Survey_Findings_Memo_Final.pdf.

⁵⁴ Email from the National Park Service to of the office of Senator Tom Coburn, April, 25, 2013.

⁵⁵ The 59 National Parks totals \$4,855,152,300 in 2012. Email from the National Park Service to of the office of Senator Tom Coburn, April, 25, 2013.

⁵⁶ As of 2012, Yellowstone National Park’s deferred maintenance backlog was \$616,278,363 and Yosemite National Park’s was \$495,216,968. Email from the National Park Service to of the office of Senator Tom Coburn, April, 25, 2013.

⁵⁷ Email from the National Park Service to of the office of Senator Tom Coburn, April, 25, 2013.

Park	Visitation 2012	Deferred Maintenance Backlog 2012	State
Blue Ridge PKWY	15,566,678	\$529,971,967	Virginia/North Carolina
Golden Gate NRA	14,805,627	\$62,719,151	California
Great Smoky Mountains NP	9,648,269	\$290,109,337	North Carolina/Tennessee
George Washington Memorial PKWY	7,362,680	\$86,044,153	Virginia/Maryland/Washington DC
Gateway NRA	6,498,008	\$682,536,758	New York/New Jersey
Lake Mead NRA	6,275,299	\$290,882,554	Nevada/Arizona
Lincoln Memorial	6,191,361	N/A ⁵⁸	Washington DC
Natchez Trace PKWY	5,560,668	\$327,737,217	Mississippi/Alabama/Tennessee
Gulf Islands NS	5,229,026	\$ 21,153,155	Florida Mississippi
Delaware Water Gap NRA	4,986,384	\$166,126,353	New Jersey/Pennsylvania

THE MAINTENANCE BACKLOG OF THE TOP 10 MOST VISITED PARK UNITS TOTALED \$2.6 BILLION IN 2012.



TRAMPLED GRASS, CRUMBLING SIDEWALKS, COLLAPSING WALLS AND POLLUTED WATERS HAVE TURNED THE NATIONAL MALL INTO A NATIONAL DISGRACE.⁵⁹

These budget numbers are translated into real life impacts and consequences. For example, visitors to the Grand Canyon will be disheartened to know that the water supply to the heavily populated areas along the South Rim could be cut at any time.⁶⁰ The water supply is dependent on a transcanyon pipeline that was installed nearly 50

⁵⁸ Included in the National Mall and Memorial Parks deferred maintenance backlog total of \$530,135,117 in 2012.

⁵⁹ Photos taken by staff on September 29, 2013.

⁶⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

years ago, and the aluminum has deteriorated due to “water sediment abrasion, cold bent installation methods causing internal pipe wall stress, chemical reaction with corrosive soil elements, and mechanical damage by heavy mule traffic.”⁶¹ While ruptures in the pipeline “have become more frequent,” a catastrophic failure would leave the area dependent on 10,000 gallons of water in a storage tank. In order to save water during pipeline breaks, “water from the creek is used for flushing toilets and disposable plates are used at the cantina for meals.”⁶² While bottled water has had to be flown in for visitors on occasion, there is “no additional water for fire protection.”⁶³



IN MAY 2012, MULTIPLE PIPELINE BREAKS CAUSED A FORTY-FIVE FOOT SECTION OF THE TRAIL TO FAIL, RENDERING CROSS-CANYON TRAVEL IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIKERS⁶⁴

Visitors to the Grand Canyon National Park are also impacted on a daily basis by “years of continuous use and limited funds” that have caused the trails to have “fallen into disrepair.”⁶⁵ The trails taking adventurers into the Grand Canyon necessitate an upgrade of “support walls and structures [to] improve safety conditions for both hikers and stock users alike.”⁶⁶ Further, \$3 million dollars in annual funding is needed to adequately maintain the corridor trails. However, the park only gets “between \$1.5 and \$2 million annually through entrance fees, concessions franchise fees and other sources for trail maintenance and repair.”⁶⁷ In total, the deferred maintenance costs of the trails

⁶¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁶² “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁶³ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁶⁴ “Third Pipeline Break in Grand Canyon Closes Section of North Kaibab Trail,” National Park Service website, accessed September 27, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/grca/parknews/news_release_31may2012.htm.

⁶⁵ “National Park Service Announces Availability of Environmental Assessment for Mule Operations and Stock Use in Grand Canyon National Park,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2012; <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parknews/national-park-service-announces-availability-of-environmental-assessment-for-mule-operations-and-stock-use-in-grand-canyon-national-park.htm>.

⁶⁶ “National Park Service Announces Availability of Environmental Assessment for Mule Operations and Stock Use in Grand Canyon National Park,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2012; <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parknews/national-park-service-announces-availability-of-environmental-assessment-for-mule-operations-and-stock-use-in-grand-canyon-national-park.htm>.

⁶⁷ “National Park Service Announces Availability of Environmental Assessment for Mule Operations and Stock Use in Grand Canyon National Park,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2012; <http://www.nps.gov/grca/parknews/national-park-service-announces-availability-of-environmental-assessment-for-mule-operations-and-stock-use-in-grand-canyon-national-park.htm>.

alone total over \$24 million, and “unless management actions are taken in the near future, trails will continue to fall into disrepair and deferred maintenance costs will continue to increase.”⁶⁸ In total, the Grand Canyon has accumulated a \$405 million deferred maintenance backlog.⁶⁹

Deferred maintenance also poses danger to national park goers, and exposes the National Park Service to legal liabilities. For example, at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia, “the majority of the park’s walkways were constructed or renovated between 1950 and 1976” and were “laid on a bed of sand or mortar mix with no base.”⁷⁰ These walkways, which are critical for connecting people to some of the most important locations of our nation’s founding, “have settled and moved due to the impact of natural forces and vehicular traffic” creating tripping hazards. These hazards are especially dangerous for senior citizens who represent one in every four visitors to the site.⁷¹ Over the last five years, 15 tort claims have been filed due to tripping hazards at Independence National Historic Park leading to claims ranging from \$200,000 to \$2 million per year.⁷²

Major health and safety deficiencies exist in the Fishing Bridge Area of Yellowstone National Park. Garnering up to 16,000 visitors on a typical summer day (more visitors than 29 park units receive in an entire year), the water lines and tank serving the area are “well beyond normal life cycle.”⁷³ The “deteriorated condition” of the water system infrastructure has resulted in “continuous leaks and increased risk of system shutdown.”⁷⁴ The 60-to-80 year old water system loses about 50 to 70 percent of the system’s water through leaks, with reports of leaks as large as 15,000 gallons per day, per joint of pipe.⁷⁵ Beyond the water losses, there are substantive health and safety risks to the park visitors and staff. Not only do the existing lines fail to “provide adequate fire protection to the facilities of the historic district,” but “end lines and cross connections can create contamination or restrict disinfection in the drinking water system.”⁷⁶

Visitors to Yellowstone this summer were deprived of getting their picture taken in front of Inspiration Point overlooking the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone and the Lower Falls.

⁶⁸ “National Park Service Announces Availability of Environmental Assessment for Mule Operations and Stock Use in Grand Canyon National Park,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2012; <http://www.nps.gov/grea/parknews/national-park-service-announces-availability-of-environmental-assessment-for-mule-operations-and-stock-use-in-grand-canyon-national-park.htm> .

⁶⁹ Email from the National Park Service to the Office of Tom Coburn, April 25, 2013.

⁷⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

⁷¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

⁷² “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

⁷³ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

⁷⁴ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

⁷⁵ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

⁷⁶ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

The scenic viewing area has been closed due to deteriorating stairs that threaten visitor safety.⁷⁷



SAFETY CONCERNS POSED BY CRUMBLING STAIRS FORCED THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO CLOSE THE STEPS AND POPULAR INSPIRATION POINT VIEWING PLATFORM AT THE GRAND CANYON OF YELLOWSTONE.⁷⁸

The neglected investments can also have secondary impacts of actually destroying pieces of history. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park still uses a roughly 75-year old heating and ventilation system that is “well beyond its expected life span.”⁷⁹ As a result of the out-of-date system that cannot maintain a “precise temperature and humidity control,” the heating system has “damaged some of the priceless wall murals in the building.”⁸⁰

Recent visitors to the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site in New York have not been able to get the full experience because of the deteriorating condition of the building. Entire portions of the museum are “closed to the public because of the threat of falling building pieces.”⁸¹ Work is needed on the mansion to arrest further deterioration and to prevent “possible damage to the irreplaceable museum collections.”⁸²

The New York City area’s Gateway National Recreation Area is host to numerous abandoned buildings and decrepit infrastructure. Since its establishment in 1972, the

⁷⁷ “Access to Inspiration Point Restricted Because of Deteriorating Stairs,” *Yellowstone Insider*, accessed July 20, 2013; <http://yellowstoneinsider.com/2013/06/21/access-to-inspiration-point-restricted-because-of-poor/>.

⁷⁸ “Safety Concerns Prompt Temporary Canyon Viewpoint Closure,” National Park Service Yellowstone National Park website, June 20, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/yell/parknews/13048.htm>.

⁷⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁸⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁸¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁸² “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

site's facilities have been "neglected and stand in varying states of disrepair."⁸³ The Gateway National Recreation Area has an astounding \$682.5 million deferred maintenance backlog, the largest of any park unit.

The constant presence of police cars, rescue vehicles, and overhead helicopters surrounding the Floyd Bennett Field Airport, an abandoned building within the unit, has been described as "a perpetual state of emergency."⁸⁴ The once active Floyd Bennett Field airport has devolved into an eyesore under the management of the National Park Service.



FLOYD BENNETT FIELD AIRPORT WITHIN THE GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS BEING IN "A PERPETUAL STATE OF EMERGENCY."

One of the areas within Gateway National Recreation Area is even radioactive, with several "hot spots" of radium contaminating the soil. For the past four years, half of the 488-acre Great Kills Park has been closed, including "five ballfields, three soccer pitches, a model-airplane field and a fishing area."⁸⁵ Eight years after the contamination was initially discovered, the Gateway National Recreation Area superintendent reported "we're in the discovery phase now."⁸⁶ According to a local newspaper account, the recent discovery of more hot spots "prolongs a federal cleanup process that has lacked a properly high priority since the first Great Kills hot spots were identified in 2005."⁸⁷ The commissioner of the National Parks of New York Harbor told a local newspaper that "the process hasn't been as fast as anyone would like, but it is advancing."⁸⁸ A local assemblywoman gave a less optimistic account, stating, "[The NPS doesn't] give us a

⁸³ "Threats to Gateway: Gateway National Recreation Area," National Parks Conservation Association website, accessed July 22, 2013; <http://www.npca.org/about-us/regional-offices/northeast/northeast-pages/threats.html>.

⁸⁴ "Landing at Floyd Bennett Field, New York's First Airport," Abandoned NYC website, March 30, 2013; <http://abandonednyc.com/tag/gateway-national-recreation-area/>.

⁸⁵ "Wider and faster cleanup is needed at Staten Island's poisoned park," Staten Island Advance, September 25, 2013; http://www.silive.com/opinion/editorials/index.ssf/2013/09/wider_and_faster_cleanup_is_ne.html.

⁸⁶ "Wider and faster cleanup is needed at Staten Island's poisoned park," Staten Island Advance, September 25, 2013; http://www.silive.com/opinion/editorials/index.ssf/2013/09/wider_and_faster_cleanup_is_ne.html.

⁸⁷ "Wider and faster cleanup is needed at Staten Island's poisoned park," Staten Island Advance, September 25, 2013; http://www.silive.com/opinion/editorials/index.ssf/2013/09/wider_and_faster_cleanup_is_ne.html.

⁸⁸ "Wider and faster cleanup is needed at Staten Island's poisoned park," Staten Island Advance, September 25, 2013; http://www.silive.com/opinion/editorials/index.ssf/2013/09/wider_and_faster_cleanup_is_ne.html.

strict timeline and when they do, it gets pushed back further and further.”⁸⁹ While the cleanup process of radioactive material languishes, local constituents have questioned the decision to build a “maritime forest” in Crooke’s Point, another area within Gateway National Recreation Area. As a local resident appropriately asked, “Why is the National Park Service worried about Crooke’s Point when they have a park that’s contaminated with radioactivity?”⁹⁰



AREAS OF GATEWAY NATIONAL RECREATION AREA REMAIN CLOSED EIGHT YEARS AFTER RADIOACTIVE SOIL WAS FOUND IN THE AREA

Mammoth Cave National Park in south central Kentucky, the longest known cave system in the world, is host to more than 500,000 visitors annually and an \$81 million deferred maintenance backlog.⁹¹ The backlog threatens visitors’ safety, renders the caves inaccessible to people with disabilities, and impacts the sensitive natural resources contained inside the cave. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) developed public trails that allow visitors to see the caves in the 1930’s, and “there have not been a comprehensive plans for rehabilitation or upgrade of the cave trail system since 1941.”⁹² The tourist trails have developed an “accelerating number of potholes” that have “raised safety concerns for visitors.”⁹³ The 270-foot elevator shaft that is supposed to provide

⁸⁹ “Wider and faster cleanup is needed at Staten Island’s poisoned park,” Staten Island Advance, September 25, 2013; http://www.silive.com/opinion/editorials/index.ssf/2013/09/wider_and_faster_cleanup_is_ne.html.

⁹⁰ “A question of priorities: Crooke’s Point vegetation plan proceeds while contaminated Staten Island ballfields remain off limits,” Staten Island Advance, February 17, 2012; http://www.silive.com/opinion/editorials/index.ssf/2012/02/a_question_of_priorities_crook.html.

⁹¹ Email from the National Park Service to the Office of Tom Coburn, April 25, 2013.

⁹² “Rehabilitate Cave Tour Trails: Environmental Assessment Mammoth Cave National Park,” National Park Service, October 2009; http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=mammoth%20cave%20reconstruct%20tour%20cave%20trails&source=web&cd=2&ved=oCC8QFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fparkplanning.nps.gov%2FshowFile.cfm%3FprojectID%3D17838%26docType%3Dpublic%26MIMEType%3Dapplication%25252Fpdf%26filename%3DMACA%2520final%2520Trail%2520EA_10-6-09.pdf%26clientFilename%3DMACA%2520final%2520Trail%2520EA_10-6-09.pdf&ei=zqLIUaD6N4SZrgHzhIDYAQ&usg=AFQjCNFqHsqwyeUZFAP2HMD-Zoj4YypYZw.

⁹³ “Rehabilitate Cave Tour Trails: Environmental Assessment Mammoth Cave National Park,” National Park Service, October 2009; http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=mammoth%20cave%20reconstruct%20tour%20cave%20trails&source=web&cd=2&ved=oCC8QFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fparkplanning.nps.gov%2FshowFile.cfm%3FprojectID%3D17838%26docType%3Dpublic%26MIMEType%3Dapplication%25252Fpdf%26filename%3DMACA%2520final%2520Trail%2520EA_10-6-09.pdf%26clientFilename%3DMACA%2520final%2520Trail%2520EA_10-6-09.pdf&ei=zqLIUaD6N4SZrgHzhIDYAQ&usg=AFQjCNFqHsqwyeUZFAP2HMD-Zoj4YypYZw.

access to mobility-impaired visitors has been closed since 2002, after the elevator’s cables broke and a park ranger got stuck inside. A park employee lamented its closure in 2009, stating “we all hate not having a way for people in wheelchairs to get in and out of the cave, but for safety reasons we thought it was best to do some planning and evaluate what would be best.”⁹⁴ Beyond the safety and accessibility issues for visitors, the sensitive resources inside the cave are being coated with dust from the trail materials.



POTHOLES IN MAMMOTH CAVE NATIONAL PARK HAVE CAUSED SAFETY CONCERNS FOR VISITORS AND THE ELEVATOR USED TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO MOBILITY IMPAIRED VISITORS HAS BEEN CLOSED FOR OVER A DECADE, AFTER THE ELEVATOR’S CABLES BROKE AND A PARK RANGER GOT STUCK INSIDE.

Constructed in 1929, the Lassen Volcanic National Park in California’s utility system is “ineffective, inefficient, outdated, and difficult to repair.”⁹⁵ The national park must deal with “prolonged power outages resulting from utility inadequacies [that] compromise the health and safety of the park staff and resident community, as well as increase the risk of damage to buildings in the headquarters.”⁹⁶ Moreover, “leaking water and wastewater pipes result in drafting of excessive water and potential contamination issues,” and the use of above ground propane tanks at each building



LOOSE POWER LINES ARE AMONG THE HAZARDS TO VISITORS AND STAFF AT LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONAL PARK.

⁹⁴ Gina Kinslow, “Friends volunteer to help parks,” Glasgow Daily Times, January 16, 2009; <http://glasgowdailytimes.com/features/x211921254/Friends-volunteer-to-help-parks>.

⁹⁵ “Lassen Volcanic National Park: Mineral Headquarters Utilities Replacement Environmental Assessment,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/lavo/parkmgmt/upload/Lassen-Utilities-Project-27Mar12.pdf>.

⁹⁶ “Lassen Volcanic National Park: Mineral Headquarters Utilities Replacement Environmental Assessment,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/lavo/parkmgmt/upload/Lassen-Utilities-Project-27Mar12.pdf>.

“involves greater risk of damage and subsequent explosions.”⁹⁷ According to a park document, the outdated utility infrastructure requires “constant repair,” including “2,500 hours in emergency labor...in 2007 alone.”⁹⁸

The Sutro Baths, located in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, were once the world’s largest indoor swimming establishment.⁹⁹ Now the baths stand as a glaring example of government mismanagement. Due to crumbling stairs, portions of the area are completely inaccessible to park-goers while another sign in the recreation area warns visitors “people have been swept from the rocks and drowned.”¹⁰⁰



PORTIONS OF THE SUTRO BATHS IN THE GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA ARE COMPLETELY INACCESSIBLE TO PARK-GOERS DUE TO SHODDY CONDITIONS. A SIGN IN THE RECREATION AREA WARNS VISITORS: “PEOPLE HAVE BEEN SWEEPED FROM THE ROCKS AND DROWNED.”¹⁰¹

Washington DC’s Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site, sometimes called “America’s Main Street” was named to the 2012 “America’s Endangered Spaces List.”¹⁰² The annual list compiled by the Cultural Landscape Foundation found that the park unit, the route of the inaugural parade between the U.S. Capitol and the White House, has “fallen into disrepair.”¹⁰³ According to one account, “Benches are falling apart, trees have been cut down, [and] water fountains often don’t work...”¹⁰⁴ The Foundation’s president noted “there really is this kind of very slow downward spiral that is

⁹⁷ “Lassen Volcanic National Park: Mineral Headquarters Utilities Replacement Environmental Assessment,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/lavo/parkmgmt/upload/Lassen-Utilities-Project-27Mar12.pdf>.

⁹⁸ “Lassen Volcanic National Park: Mineral Headquarters Utilities Replacement Environmental Assessment,” National Park Service website, accessed July 22, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/lavo/parkmgmt/upload/Lassen-Utilities-Project-27Mar12.pdf>.

⁹⁹ “San Francisco’s Spooky Sutro Baths,” Abandoned NYC website, June 11, 2013; <http://abandonednyc.com/2013/06/11/san-franciscos-sutro-baths/>.

¹⁰⁰ “San Francisco’s Spooky Sutro Baths,” Abandoned NYC website, June 11, 2013; <http://abandonednyc.com/2013/06/11/san-franciscos-sutro-baths/>.

¹⁰¹ “San Francisco’s Spooky Sutro Baths,” Abandoned NYC website, June 11, 2013; <http://abandonednyc.com/2013/06/11/san-franciscos-sutro-baths/>.

¹⁰² “Pennsylvania Ave. joins list of endangered spaces,” Associated Press, October 3, 2012; <http://www.myfoxdc.com/story/19727888/pennsylvania-ave-joins-list-of-endangered-spaces#ixzz28LFaJ4rE>.

¹⁰³ “Pennsylvania Ave. joins list of endangered spaces,” Associated Press, October 3, 2012; <http://www.myfoxdc.com/story/19727888/pennsylvania-ave-joins-list-of-endangered-spaces#ixzz28LFaJ4rE>.

¹⁰⁴ Richard Simone, “Pennsylvania Ave. joins list of endangered spaces,” LA Times, October 4, 2012; <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/oct/04/nation/la-na-nn-pennsylvania-avenue-cultural-20121004>.

happening,” and that the site is among a group of projects that are “dying a quiet death because of deferred maintenance and neglect.”¹⁰⁵



PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE WAS ADDED TO “AMERICA’S ENDANGERED SPACES LIST” IN 2012 BECAUSE IT HAS FALLEN INTO DISREPAIR. “BENCHES ARE FALLING APART, TREES HAVE BEEN CUT DOWN, WATER FOUNTAINS OFTEN DON’T WORK, AND ‘UNSIGHTLY SECURITY PLANTERS’ LITTER THE AVENUE.”¹⁰⁶

The expansion of commitments to the National Park Service and the simultaneous decay of the existing sites is a microcosm of why we are quickly approaching a \$17 trillion national debt; in a city driven by two-year election cycles, short-term political gain always comes before the best, long-term interests of the nation. The lack of priorities caused by a culture of undisciplined leadership and political careerism are directly to blame for the corroding of our beautiful landscapes and historical landmarks. Until Congress and the administration prioritize the maintenance of existing national parks’ obligations, the problem will continue to grow worse and some of the damage may be irreversible.

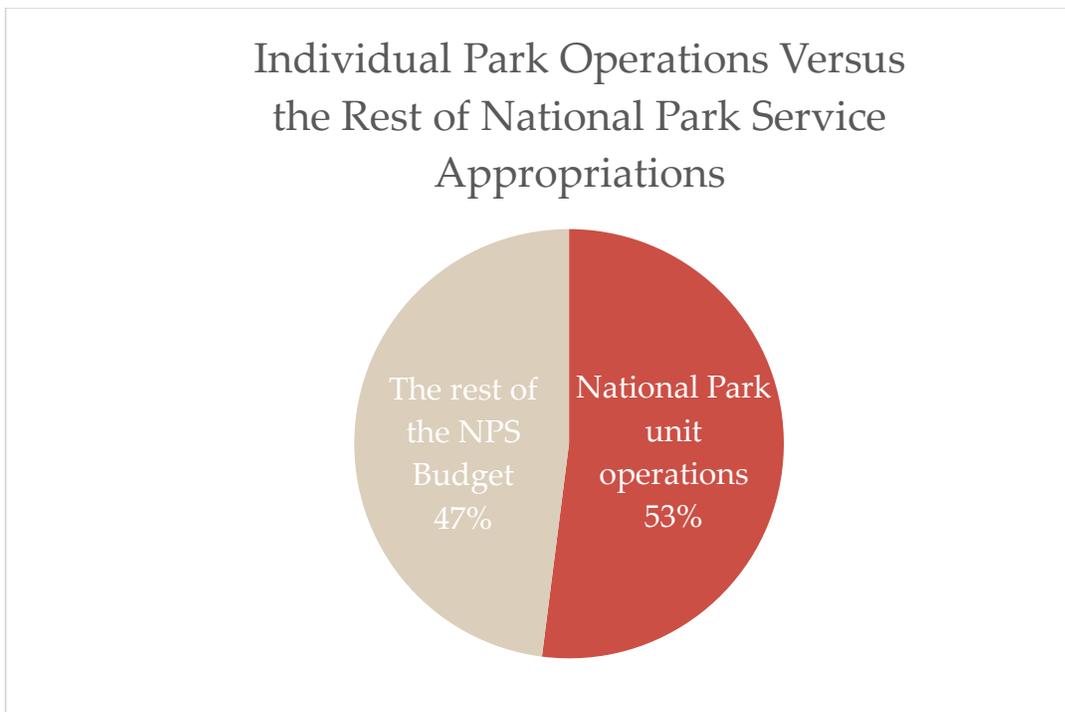
¹⁰⁵ “Pennsylvania Ave. joins list of endangered spaces,” Associated Press, October 3, 2012; <http://www.myfoxdc.com/story/19727888/pennsylvania-ave-joins-list-of-endangered-spaces#ixzz28LFaJ4rE>.

¹⁰⁶ “Pennsylvania Ave. joins list of endangered spaces,” Associated Press, October 3, 2012; <http://www.myfoxdc.com/story/19727888/pennsylvania-ave-joins-list-of-endangered-spaces#ixzz28LFaJ4rE>.

CHAPTER II: THE UNFOCUSED NATIONAL PARK SERVICE BUDGET

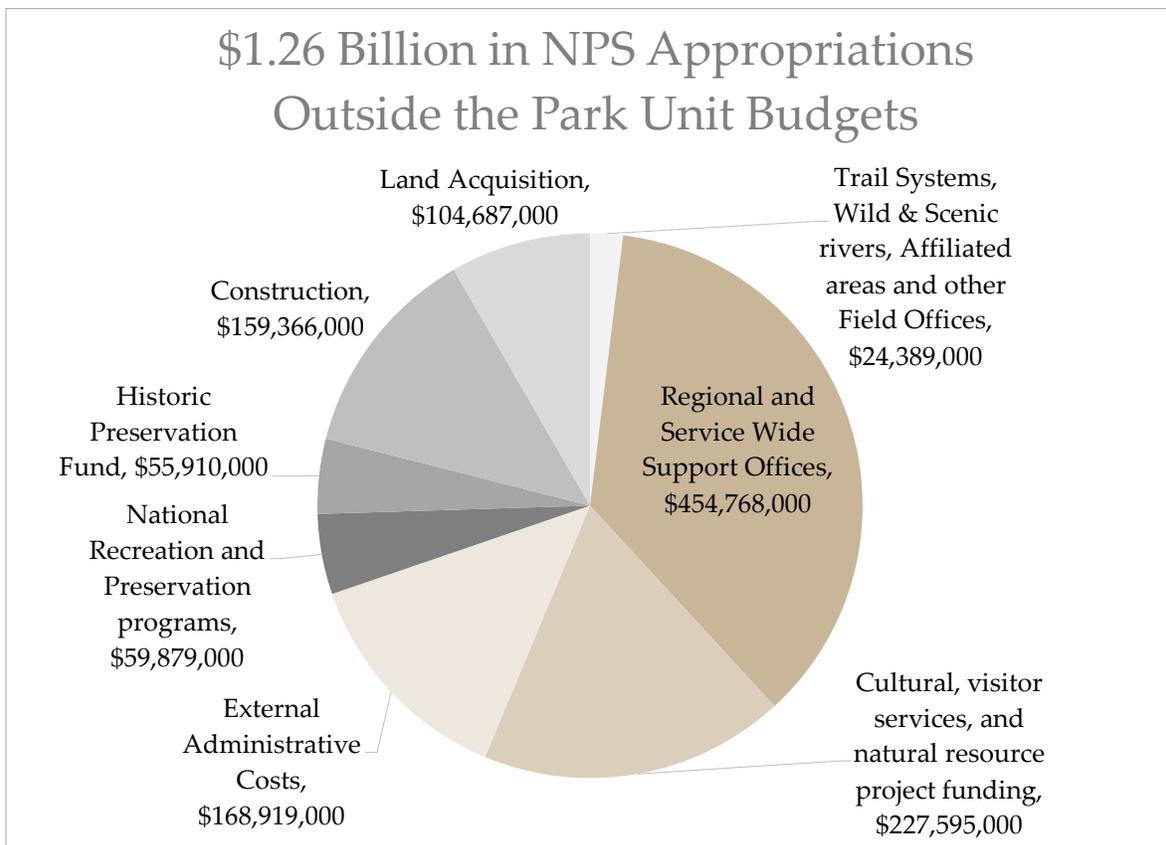
The National Park Service is entrusted with the honor and challenge to exhibit and protect America’s iconic landscapes and cultural heritage sites for this generation and many more to come. This mission involves balancing innumerable responsibilities involving resource protection, visitor services, and maintenance at our parks. Meeting the vast needs to accomplish this complex mission at 401 park units representing the entire spectrum of landscapes, climates and resource types is neither easy nor cheap. Many stakeholders from inside and outside the Park Service have pointed to the latter point, citing budgetary shortfalls as strangling the NPS’s ability to effectively carry out its duties.¹⁰⁷ **The proffered solution is a common one in Washington DC – all it takes is more funding. A closer inspection of the NPS budget and funding decisions reveals that interested stakeholders should be calling for streamlining rather than stimulus.**

BARELY HALF OF CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS GO TO THE PARKS



¹⁰⁷ “INFOGRAPHIC: National Park Need Help,” National Parks Conservation Association website, accessed August 12, 2013; <http://www.npca.org/protecting-our-parks/park-funding/funding-infographic.html> and “National parks show signs of wear and tear,” NBC Nightly News, May 27, 2013; <http://www.nbcnews.com/video/nightly-news/52015732#52015732>.

With a \$3 billion budget, of which \$2.58 billion is derived from congressional appropriations, the NPS budget has grown by 20 percent since 2003.¹⁰⁸ At \$1.36 billion in Fiscal Year 2012, the amount of funding budgeted for operations for the 401 park units constitutes barely half of the total funds provided to NPS by Congress. The remaining appropriated funds go towards a multitude of activities, including national and regional administrative offices, specialized support offices, affiliate areas, grant programs, research centers, administrative expenses, and additional land acquisition.¹⁰⁹



NPS SPENDS \$1.26 BILLION ON A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS OUTSIDE THE INDIVIDUAL PARK UNIT BUDGETS

Congress has not only exponentially increased the number of park units in the National Park System since its creation in 1916; it has also expanded NPS responsibilities far beyond the original purpose of managing the parks. NPS programs now intervene in activities at the local, state, federal, and even international levels. This expansion of responsibilities beyond the original scope of the park service dilutes the budget while removing the focus on preserving the true treasures of the United States. **The National Park Service’s mission has become lost, its budget has become convoluted, and the funding priorities have become misaligned.**

¹⁰⁸ The NPS budget includes \$400 million in mandatory funds derived mainly from recreational and concessions fees along with donations. “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

As the deferred maintenance backlog grows by more than a quarter of a billion dollars this year, the park service's unfocused budget too often funds programs that are inessential, inefficient, or display a lack of priorities.

INESSENTIAL. Wine trains, neon sign restoration, teachers' symposiums, car shows, DC area-concert subsidies, covered bridge conferences, folk festivals, inflatable fair rides and video games are all activities that have been funded by federal tax dollars that have dubious merit or value to the NPS. These frivolous activities draw resources away from critical maintenance needs at sites such as Yosemite and Yellowstone, which have a combined \$1 billion deferred maintenance backlog.

INEFFICIENT AND DUPLICATIVE. The park service's expansive bureaucracy equates to an average of \$1.5 million in overhead costs for each of the 401 park units, four federal entities manage memorials in the nation's capital area, at least six different federal programs provide support for international cultural sites, and a panoply of programs, grants, and tax credits support local historical development projects at an enormous expense to the taxpayer. These inefficiencies and redundant efforts unnecessarily drive up federal costs and reduce the resources available for critical maintenance work.

LACK OF PRIORITIES. The constant buildup in the backlog of deferred maintenance projects, which now stands at \$11.5 billion, is a daunting problem that has been met with a meek response. Despite the National Park Service's maintenance activities being underfunded by \$256 million this year, the Park Service continues to purchase more property, sometimes at rates higher than \$100,000 per acre. Moreover, Congress and the administration have banned the collection of recreation fees at some sites, while failing to set a sensible fee rate or cogent allocation system that fits the current pressing needs of the day. While the issues needing attention continue to stack up at our national treasures, the administration provides no solutions in its planning documents and in some cases makes the problems worse.

As the current NPS Director testified before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the key to reversing the growth of the \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog is through Congressional appropriations. **Fortunately, since only half of the funds appropriated for NPS are directed towards the individual park units, there is ample room to reform the budget to properly maintain the parks without impacting park operations or adding to the \$17 trillion national debt.**

INESSENTIAL PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

The National Park Service has strayed far from its original mission set by the National Park Service Organic Act in 1916 to “promote and regulate the use of the Federal areas known as national parks, monuments and reservations...”¹¹⁰ Between attending Italian film festivals, funding auto shows, and restoring neon signs, the NPS budget too often places wants over needs, ultimately detracting from achieving the original purpose of the NPS. The park service spends limited resources on a variety of low-priority programs, including Heritage Partnership Programs, the National Capital Area Performing Arts Program, and the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. Moreover, many grants and other activities of questionable federal merit have been funded by NPS, including folk festivals, inflatable rides, and video games.

As you read this section, ask yourself if funds spent on a certain activity is more important than ensuring a safe and enjoyable visitor experience at sites such as Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, or Independence Hall National Parks.

EVERLASTING EARMARKS: THE HERITAGE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMS

The National Park Service spends \$17.3 million annually on the Heritage Partnership Programs, which provides funding for 49 National Heritage Areas (NHA).¹¹¹ The NPS defines a NHA as “a place designated by the United States Congress where natural, cultural, historic and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally-distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography.”¹¹² There is no federal statute or criteria for establishing a NHA. In the absence of a formal process, these entities can only be designated by a congressional earmark. Since 2000, Congress has increased the number of NHAs from 18 to 49. There were 10 NHAs earmarked in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 alone.¹¹³

The National Park Service supports the NHAs through federal recognition, technical assistance, and federal funding that serves as “seed money” to help local coordinating entities get a jump-start for local efforts. The administration identified their concern with the program in the FY2013 National Park Service budget, which warned, “managers of NHAs continue to rely heavily on federal funding, although the program was not intended as a pathway to long-term Federal funding for individual Heritage

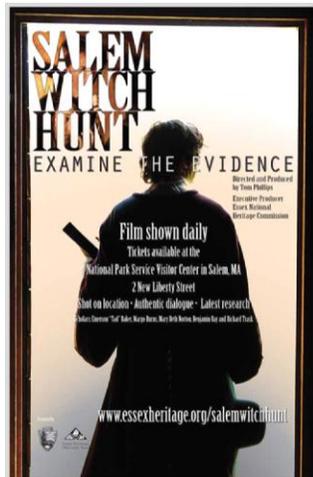
¹¹⁰ Larry M., Dilsaver, “America’s National Park System: The Critical Documents,” Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1994; http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/anps/anps_ii.htm.

¹¹¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹¹² “What are National Heritage Areas?” National Park Service website, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FAQ/>.

¹¹³ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

Areas.”¹¹⁴ Despite this warning, Congress reauthorized 12 NHAs on a spending bill in March of this year that had outlasted the original 15-year sunset, including the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor that has existed for more than 25 years.¹¹⁵



The NHA program has been identified for reduction and elimination several times. In the FY2013 Cuts, Consolidations, and Savings list, President Obama proposed a 50 percent reduction for the Heritage Partnership Programs, citing the need to focus available resources towards higher priority initiatives over “lower-priority grants” to NHAs.¹¹⁶ The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) recommended eliminating funding for National Heritage Areas in its deficit reduction budget options.¹¹⁷

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted that NHAs do not have “results-oriented performance goals and measures in its oversight of heritage areas and has failed to track federal funding or determine the appropriateness of expenditures for the NHA program.”¹¹⁸ The lack of oversight is readily apparent in some of the funding decisions and activities sponsored by the heritage areas. The following expenditures are especially troubling when the federal government has accumulated a \$17 trillion national debt and cannot keep up with the basic maintenance needs in the Park System.

Motorcities National Heritage Area helps coordinate and promote the Spooktacular Automotive Halloween Contests and Autopalooza, a summer long celebration of “Southeast Michigan’s automotive heritage,” including auto races, car shows, vintage car auctions, and rolling cruises. Motorcities NHA will also provide funding support for the Automotive Authors Book Fair where attendees can “share with the public their passion for all things automotive.”¹¹⁹



¹¹⁴ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2013,” National Park Service, 2012; http://home.nps.gov/applications/budget2/FY13_NPS_Greenbook.pdf.

¹¹⁵ P.L. 113-6

¹¹⁶ “Fiscal Year 2013: Cuts, Consolidations, and Savings,” Office of Management and Budget, 2012; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2013/assets/ccs.pdf>.

¹¹⁷ “Budget Options: Volume 2,” Congress of the United States Congressional Budget Office, August 2009; <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/102xx/doc10294/08-06-budgetoptions.pdf>.

¹¹⁸ “Budget Options: Volume 2,” Congress of the United States Congressional Budget Office, August 2009; <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/102xx/doc10294/08-06-budgetoptions.pdf>.

¹¹⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf and “7th Automotive Authors Book Fair,” Detroit Public Library website, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.detroit.lib.mi.us/story/7th-automotive-authors-book-fair>.



The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area awarded \$225,000 to “preserve and promote Western North Carolina’s heritage.” The federally funded projects include “\$6,560 to enhance the presentation of music and dance at the Historic Orchard at Altapass.... \$18,000 for a new sound system for the Ashe Civic Center.... \$14,000 to support a documentary film about pioneering forestry educator Carl Schenck.... [and] \$10,000 for a mobile website [and] enhancements to a backstage green room.”¹²⁰

The Ohio & Erie Canal National Heritage Area promoted the “CVSR Wine-Tasting Express: A Taste of Wines Across the USA,” by which participants could take a “a leisurely ride through the beautiful Cuyahoga Valley aboard CVSR while tasting five choice wines plus appetizers.”¹²¹ The Essex National Heritage Area in Massachusetts was an executive producer for the movie, “Salem Witch Hunt: Examine the Evidence” and the Augusta Canal NHA in Georgia sponsors a variety of music cruises, including one featuring an Elvis Impersonator.^{122 123}

Congress recently had an opportunity to implement the President’s recommendation to reduce spending on National Heritage Areas by 50 percent in order to concentrate the resources on more pressing needs. On March 20th, 2013, the Senate voted on an amendment that would have implemented the administration’s recommended budget reduction and utilized those savings to resume public tours at the White House along with augmenting maintenance work and visitors services at other park units.¹²⁴ Opponents of the amendment to implement the President’s proposal referred to the provision as “misguided” and “cynical,” and the amendment was rejected 45-54.

¹²⁰ Caitlin Byrd, “Blue Ridge National Heritage Area announces grant awards,” Mountain Xpress, May 16, 2013; <http://www.mountainx.com/article/50110/Blue-Ridge-National-Heritage-Area-announces-grant-awards> .

¹²¹ “Canalway Events,” Ohio & Erie Canal website, accessed August 1, 2013; <http://www.ohioandiericanalway.com/Main/Events/458.aspx> .

¹²² “About,” Essex National Heritage Area Website, accessed August 1, 2013; <http://www.essexheritage.com/salemwitchhunt/index.shtml> .

¹²³ “View Galleries,” Augusta Canal National Heritage Area website, accessed August 1, 2013; <http://www.augustacanal.com/PG/V1/Default.aspx?galleryid=6A21F6E2-29B7-2237-C77E-D3650602FAF1> .

¹²⁴ “U.S. Senate Roll Call Votes 113th Congress- 1st Session: Question on the Amendment Coburn Amdt. No. 93,” United States Senate website, accessed August 1, 2013; http://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_lists/roll_call_vote_cfm.cfm?congress=113&session=1&vote=00040 .



MOTORCITIES NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA, WHICH IS FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, HELPS COORDINATE AND PROMOTE THE SPOOKTACULAR AUTOMOTIVE HALLOWEEN CONTESTS AND AUTOPALOOZA, A SUMMER LONG CELEBRATION OF "SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN'S AUTOMOTIVE HERITAGE," WHICH INCLUDES AUTO RACES, CAR SHOWS, AND VINTAGE CAR AUCTIONS.

FREE COUNSELING: THE RIVERS TRAILS AND CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The National Park Service spends more than \$10 million annually on the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program. This program provides “consultation and other professional services” for local conservation and recreation projects.¹²⁵ The RTCA does not provide monetary support for projects or own or manage any land. Rather, the program funds are used to provide “a National Park Service employee to help organize, strategize, build public participation, and help implement a conservation and/or recreation project that is important to your community.”¹²⁶ The staff member will assist the community “by listening to your project needs, helping you identify the next steps to make your project successful, and helping you find the resources to make your project a reality.”¹²⁷

As succinctly described on the NPS website, “Local groups select the trails, rivers, and other places where they want to improve conservation or recreation opportunities. These local groups then ask National Park Service staff to join them to work on their projects. You lead your projects, and we provide guidance along the way.”

Another federal program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) stateside program, also supports outdoor recreation and conservation projects for state and local

¹²⁵ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013;

http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹²⁶ “Frequently Asked Questions,” National Park Service website, accessed August 1, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/faqs.htm>.

¹²⁷ “Frequently Asked Questions,” National Park Service website, accessed August 1, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/faqs.htm>.

governments. The LWCF stateside program funding level was \$45 million in FY2012 and has provided 42,035 grants for outdoor recreation projects throughout the history of the program.¹²⁸

Further, NPS directly funds and manages thousands of miles of rivers and trails in the park system. This includes \$12.5 million annually for the National Trail System and \$1.7 million for Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers.¹²⁹

RTCA's free guidance to local communities cost the federal taxpayers \$10 million per year, or about \$55,000 for each of the 180 projects planned this year. With a mounting deferred maintenance backlog, the \$10 million may be better spent preventing the diminishing quality of our national treasures.



NPS SPENDS \$14.2 MILLION TO OPERATE NATIONAL TRAIL AND RIVER SYSTEMS AND SPENDS ANOTHER \$10 MILLION PROVIDING ADVICE TO COMMUNITIES ON HOW TO BUILD THEIR OWN TRAILS.

¹²⁸ Carol Hardy Vincent, "Land and Water Conservation Fund: Overview, Funding History, and Issues," Congressional Research Service, March 5, 2013.

¹²⁹ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

CAPITAL AREA ENTERTAINMENT SUBSIDIES

National Capital Area Performing Arts Program

Taxpayers subsidize Washington DC residents' entertainment options through the Park Service's National Capital Area Performing Arts Program. NPS has provided nearly \$15 million since 2007 to supplement DC area concert venue budgets for activities such as advertising, televised productions, lighting, sound, performers, instruments, ushers, stagehands, cashiers and other support staff costs.¹³⁰ This funding supported free shows as part of the 2012 summer concert series at Carter Barron Amphitheatre, which included Jazz Night, Reggae Night, Boogie Blues Night, Neo Soul Night, and East Coast Dance Concert hosted by Culture Shock while hosting free jazz and R&B concerts as part of the Fort Dupont Summer Series.¹³¹

Even the National Park Service has identified this program for elimination, stating it is “not directly related to the mission of the National Park Service” and the resources could be directed towards “maintaining the most critical park operations and fulfilling its core mission.”¹³² Yet, Congress has ignored the administration's request to eliminate the National Capital Area Performing Arts Program, maintaining \$2.1 million in annual entertainment subsidies for the Washington DC area.¹³³

Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts

When thinking about our National Parks, most Americans would more likely associate the terms earth, wind, and fire as the natural elements that have shaped our beautiful landscapes. Fortunately for Washington DC area residents, an Earth, Wind, and Fire concert is one of many performances they can attend at the Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts twenty miles away in Vienna, Virginia. The Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts hosts over 90 performances every year, including musicians Harry Connick Jr. and Ke\$ha and comedians Bill Cosby and Steve Martin. When the park was established by Congress in 1966, the Washington Post heralded the park as contributing “enormously to the amenities of living in this area” and the usage of public space for “relaxation and cultural enrichment.”¹³⁴

The non-profit Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing arts, the organization that partners with NPS to manage the venue, generates between \$25 and \$30 million in

¹³⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹³¹ “2012 Summer Concert Series,” National Park Service website, accessed August 15, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/ncro/PublicAffairs/SummerintheCity.htm>.

¹³² “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹³³ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹³⁴ “Good Day for Parks,” The Washington Post, October 19, 1966.

revenue every year, including nearly \$15 million in ticket sales.¹³⁵ Despite this significant revenue stream, the Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts receives \$4.1 million annually through the NPS budget. Wolf Trap also receives funding from the \$2.1 million National Capital Area Performing Arts Program, which helps provide funding for Wolf Trap’s ushers and stagehands.¹³⁶

The \$4.1 million in annual NPS funding offsets the lavish salaries paid to the Wolf Trap Foundation’s board. In 2011, the Wolf Trap Foundation paid its five board members an average of \$272,000, including more than \$500,000 in total compensation for the foundation’s president.¹³⁷

There is another federally funded performing arts center located within 15 miles of Wolf Trap. The John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, located just on the other side of the Potomac River, receives \$40 million in federal funds every year. Opened in 1971, the Kennedy Center hosts more than 2000 performances annually and more than 2 million attendees.¹³⁸

While there are more than 100 amphitheatres throughout the United States, only the one located within 20 miles of Capitol Hill is subsidized by American tax dollars.



THE NON-PROFIT THAT PARTNERS WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO MANAGE THE WOLF TRAP NATIONAL PARK FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, GENERATES AS MUCH AS \$30 MILLION IN REVENUE EVERY YEAR BUT IS ALSO SUBSIDIZED WITH MORE THAN \$4 MILLION ANNUALLY FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.

¹³⁵ Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts 990 Form, Internal Revenue Service;

<http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2011/237/011/2011-237011544-08ae9a32-9.pdf> .

¹³⁶ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

¹³⁷ Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts 990 Form, Internal Revenue Service;

<http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2011/237/011/2011-237011544-08ae9a32-9.pdf> .

¹³⁸ “Recognizing and Presenting: The Greatest Performers and Performances,” The Kennedy Center website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.kennedy-center.org/about/performances.html> .

REGION CREATES PATHWAY TO FEDERAL FUNDING: CHESAPEAKE BAY GATEWAYS AND TRAILS

The National Park Service spends nearly \$2 million annually on the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails program.¹³⁹ NPS works with local stakeholders to “provide better access to the Chesapeake and rivers, to conserve important landscapes and resources, to engage youth in meaningful work and place-based education, to improve recreational opportunities, and to interpret the natural and cultural resources of the Chesapeake Bay.”¹⁴⁰ The program is designed to link “gateway” sites around the Chesapeake Bay and offer grants and technical assistance to these sites. Gateway sites include parks, wildlife refuges, and trails that promote, educate, and provide access to visitors on the Chesapeake Bay. Currently, there are more than 170 gateways in six states and Washington DC and more than 1,500 miles of trails.¹⁴¹

The \$2 million program duplicates extensive taxpayer commitments already made to the region. The regional network receives a combined \$346,000 in separate annual funding for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, and another \$147,000 in funding for the Baltimore National Heritage Area.¹⁴² Moreover, the federal government supports recreational opportunities through a multitude of individual national park units in the region, including **51 park units** in the Maryland, Virginia, and Washington DC area alone. In addition to duplicative funding for recreational activities, the program’s activities also duplicate existing federal or state initiatives, including teacher symposiums and job corps training.¹⁴³

Congress should be prioritizing the budget to fix the \$3.3 billion worth of crumbling structures and roads in the park units within the states of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails Network, rather than funding \$35,280 for interpretive boat tours for waterfront development projects or \$100,000 for creating travel guides for the Maryland’s Office of Tourism.¹⁴⁴ ¹⁴⁵ While the merits of a network coordinating regional recreational areas are laudable, the federal role in this endeavor is not.

¹³⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁴⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁴¹ “Things to Do,” National Park Service website, accessed September 30, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/chba/planyourvisit/things2do.htm>.

¹⁴² “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁴³ “FY2012 Financial Assistance Investments in Outdoor Recreation and Education,” Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network website, accessed September 30, 2013; http://www.baygateways.net/viewrelease.cfm?press_release_id=297.

¹⁴⁴ “2009 Year in Review: Chesapeake Bay Office,” Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network website; http://www.baygateways.net/pubs/2009_Year_in_Review_NPS_CBO.pdf.

¹⁴⁵ Chesapeake Bay Gateway Network earmarks, Office of Management and Budget website, http://earmarks.omb.gov/earmarks-public/2008-earmarks/earmark_291767.html.

GET YOUR PORK FIX ON ROUTE 66: ROUTE 66 CORRIDOR PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The National Park Service administers the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, which provides \$286,000 annually in grants “to support the preservation of the most significant and representative historic Route 66 buildings, structures, road segments, and cultural landscapes in the eight states through which the route passes.”¹⁴⁶ Grants are provided for the “restoration of restaurants, motels, gas stations and neon signs, as well as for planning, research and educational initiatives.”¹⁴⁷ Federal support for the Route 66 program was originally scheduled to terminate in 2009 and transition to a non-federal entity. However, Congress extended the federal commitment an additional 10 years, protecting the low-priority program and its associated frivolous spending through 2019.

In Oklahoma, Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program grants have been used to renovate an abandoned gas station and used car lot and to restore the facade of a theatre.¹⁴⁸ Another grant helped “promote and support the touring dramatic production, Route 66: A Celebration of America’s Main Street.” The Northern Arizona University’s Department of Theatre was awarded the funds for the production that was “an interpretive and educational venue that celebrates the experience of travel during the heyday of Route 66.”¹⁴⁹



NPS PROVIDED GRANT MONEY TO SUPPORT THE THEATRE PRODUCTION, “ROUTE 66: A CELEBRATION OF AMERICA’S MAIN STREET”

¹⁴⁶ “Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program,” National Park Service website, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/history/rt66/prgrm/index.htm>

¹⁴⁷ “News Release: Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program Reauthorization,” National Park Service, May 5, 2009; <http://www.nps.gov/history/rt66/news/PressRelease-NPSRT66Reauthorization.pdf>.

¹⁴⁸ “Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program- Funded Projects” National Park Service website, 2009; <http://www.cr.nps.gov/rt66/grnts/2009GrantAwards.pdf>, “Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program - Funded Projects,” National Park Service website, 2008; <http://www.nps.gov/history/rt66/grnts/2008GrantAwards.pdf>; and “Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program - Funded Projects,” National Park Service website, 2012; <http://www.nps.gov/history/rt66/grnts/2012GrantAwards.pdf>.

¹⁴⁹ “Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program- Funded Projects” National Park Service website, 2004; <http://www.nps.gov/history/rt66/grnts/2004GrantAwards.pdf>.

With the help of the National Park Service Route 66 program, between the years 2001 and 2012, \$217,084 in federal tax dollars was spent to restore 29 neon signs.¹⁵⁰



THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ROUTE 66 PROGRAM HAS SPENT MORE THAN \$215,000 TO RESTORE NEON SIGNS

OTHER FRIVOLOUS EXPENDITURES

Despite a \$256 million shortfall in maintenance funding and a \$17 trillion national debt, the National Park Service spent federal tax dollars on the following frivolous activities:

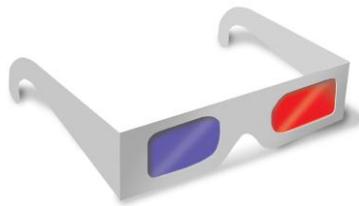
- **\$367,000 for music festivals:** Despite the uproars of budget constraints during sequestration, NPS spent \$367,000 to support various music festivals during the summer of 2013. NPS spent \$29,000 on the Richmond Folk Festival¹⁵¹, \$18,000 for the New Bedford Water Front Festival¹⁵², \$58,000 for the

¹⁵⁰ "Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program," National Park Service website, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/history/rt66/grnts/index.htm>.

¹⁵¹ WASO-NPS-P13AC00728: Richmond Folk Festival, National Park Service-Department of Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=%22richmond%20folk%20festival%22>.

¹⁵² NPS-WASO-P13AC00729: New Bed Ford Water Front Festival, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice, <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=new%20bedford>.

National Folk Festival Showcase in St. Louis, Missouri¹⁵³, \$32,000 for the Blue Ridge Music Festival¹⁵⁴, and \$230,000 through two separate grants for a series of folk festivals in Lowell, Massachusetts.¹⁵⁵ NPS even provides the Lowell Festival Foundation staff a “government-owned cell phone for official uses and the performance of assigned duties.”¹⁵⁶



- \$174,000 3D HD Underwater Imaging Project:** NPS has provided \$174,000 to the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution to document underwater natural and cultural features in 3D high-definition (HD).¹⁵⁷ The project’s purpose was to show “rarely seen resources to the public through a stimulating and immersive 3D HD technology” surrounding various national park units, including Isle Royale National Park and Pearl Harbor National Historic Site. Instead of funding an expensive photo-shoot or rarely seen objects, the \$174,000 could have been used to fix the too often seen degenerated structures.

- NPS provides funds for Inflatable Fair Rides:** The scope of the NPS has expanded to funding inflatable rides at county fairs. In August 2012, NPS provided \$2,500 to rent inflatable rides at Hoover Hometown Days, an annual festival in West Branch, Iowa.¹⁵⁸



¹⁵³ WASO-NPS-P13AC00742: 74th National Folk Festival Intent to Award, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=%22richmond%20folk%20festival%22> .

¹⁵⁴ WASO-NPS-P13AC00748: Blue Ridge Music Center Programs, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=%22richmond%20folk%20festival%22> .

¹⁵⁵ NPS-13-NEO-0021: Notice of Intent to Award: Lowell Folk Festival; Lowell Summer Music Series, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=%22richmond%20folk%20festival%22> and WASO-NPS-P13AC00745: 27th Lowell Festival Intent to Award, National Park Service — Department of the Interior; Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=%22folk%20festival%22> .

¹⁵⁶ NPS-13-NEO-0021: Notice of Intent to Award: Lowell Folk Festival; Lowell Summer Music Series, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=%22richmond%20folk%20festival%22> .

¹⁵⁷ NPSNOIIMRO120021: Assess the feasibility of 3D HD cameras to create photogrammetric, volumetric models of submerged underwater sites throughout the NPS jurisdiction, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=NPSNOIIMRO10295>, NPSNOIIMRO10295: Generate 3D high definition imaging to document the underwater wonders, both natural and cultural, at Isle Royale National Park, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=NPSNOIIMRO10295> and NPSNOIIMRO10104: Generate 3D high definition imaging to generate underwater and topside imagery at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and Saipan National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=NPSNOIIMRO10295> .

¹⁵⁸ Gregory R. Norfleet, “Council hesitates on ‘Days rides,’” West Branch Times Online, October 12, 2012; <http://www.westbranchtimes.com/article.php?id=8659> .

- 7 years, 3 studies and \$731,000 spent investigating Gateway Arch for cleaning without any cleaning getting done:** The NPS spent at least \$731,000 on three studies over a seven year span to inspect the Gateway Arch for stains to be cleaned, without actually doing any cleaning. A public information officer said that "One of the reasons it takes so long is it's not easy to access to look at closely.... We're taking it step by step, we want to do it correctly, we don't want to cause any harm, we don't want to waste dollars starting a process that's incorrect."¹⁵⁹
- NPS funds application for NPS property to receive NPS designation:** NPS will spend \$50,000 to assist in the production of a National Register of Historic Places nomination form for two entrances to Yellowstone National Park – the “Northeast Entrance Road Historic District” and the “West Entrance Road Historic District National Register.”¹⁶⁰ The funds will assist the University of Wyoming develop and research the application to the NPS National Register and NPS staff “will review and edit the draft National Register Nomination to ensure that the National Register standards are met.”¹⁶¹ In summary, the Park Service will spend \$50,000 to submit NPS property to the NPS for consideration to receive a NPS designation. Instead of awarding a \$50,000 grant, perhaps NPS could have just awarded the historic designation.
- NPS Video Game Production:** The NPS National Center for Preservation Training and Technology awarded a \$25,000 grant to a Rochester Institute of Technology professor “to develop an interactive video game that will transport students to virtual worlds of preservation and conservation archetypes.”¹⁶² The video game is based on the role-playing game, *Elderscrolls IV: Oblivion*, and players will be able to assume “the role of a conservator, conservation scientist or collection manager by virtually interacting with objects, materials and data embedded in quest narratives.”¹⁶³ Various game options will allow players “to manage a library and protect it from the elements



¹⁵⁹ Ryan Dean, “More money needed for Gateway Arch cleaning,” KSDK, November, 2012; <http://www.ksdk.com/news/article/347599/3/731000-spent-on-dirty-Arch-and-its-not-clean> .

¹⁶⁰ NPS-NOIP13AC00630: National Park Service-National Register Nomination for the Northeast Entrance Road, National Park Service- Department of Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=236638> .

¹⁶¹ NPS-NOIP13AC00630: National Park Service-National Register Nomination for the Northeast Entrance Road, National Park Service- Department of Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=236638> .

¹⁶² Vienna Carvalho-McGrain, “RIT Professor Wins Grant to Design Historic Preservation Video Game,” RIT News, September 2, 2011; <http://www.rit.edu/news/story.php?id=48538> .

¹⁶³ Vienna Carvalho-McGrain, “RIT Professor Wins Grant to Design Historic Preservation Video Game,” RIT News, September 2, 2011; <http://www.rit.edu/news/story.php?id=48538> .

that accelerate deterioration. Another quest will allow players to take samples from ancient artifacts and analyze them to discover the secrets of its past.”¹⁶⁴

NPS also developed “Hold the Fort,” a video game that allows players to be “in charge of Fort McHenry during the Battle of Baltimore, responsible for the defense of the fort and the city.”¹⁶⁵ In the meantime, the real Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Site has accumulated \$3.58 million in deferred maintenance needs.

- **NPS spends \$79,000 to collect data on “Visitor Perceptions of Climate Change in U.S. National Parks”:** In August 2013, the Park Service awarded \$79,000 to the Center for Climate Change Communication “to investigate the climate change perceptions of visitors to National Parks and their reception of place-based climate change messages.”¹⁶⁶ The survey will be based on Yale University’s “Global Warming’s Six America’s Survey,” which divides the public into six groups along a spectrum of attitudes towards the impacts of climate change from *Alarmed* to *Dismissive*.¹⁶⁷ It is unclear what the connection between a person’s attitude towards climate change and whether they are inside a national park boundary or not, but it is clear that NPS funding would be better spent fixing the visitors’ reality of \$11.5 billion worth of crumbling infrastructure. The NPS expenditure is especially questionable given the massive investment the federal government already makes towards climate change programs. Between FY2008 and FY2012, 14 separate federal agencies spent \$68.4 billion on climate change activities.¹⁶⁸
- **\$30 million campaign to celebrate 100 Year Anniversary:** To prepare for the National Park Service centennial celebration in 2016, the National Park Service has hired the Grey Group, a high-end international marketing firm.¹⁶⁹ The NPS will reportedly pay the firm \$6 million annually for five years to manage “a multiplatform communications initiative.”¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁴ Vienna Carvalho-McGrain, “RIT Professor Wins Grant to Design Historic Preservation Video Game,” RIT News, September 2, 2011; <http://www.rit.edu/news/story.php?id=48538> .

¹⁶⁵ “Education Programming,” Friends of Fort McHenry website, accessed September 30, 2013; <http://www.friendsoffortmchenry.org/education-programming.html> .

¹⁶⁶ P13AS00224: Visitor Perceptions of Climate Change in U.S. National Parks, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=%20P13AS00224> .

¹⁶⁷ “Global Warming’s Six America’s in March 2012 and November 2011,” Yale/George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication; <http://environment.yale.edu/climate-communication/files/Six-Americas-March-2012.pdf> .

¹⁶⁸ Jane A. Leggett, “Funding for Federal Climate Change Activities, FY2008 to FY2012

,” Congressional Research Service, April 26, 2012;

http://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=91e9fae6-083a-44f6-b47c-33fdac25d6e0

¹⁶⁹ “National Park Service Moving To Engage Company To Promote 2016 Centennial,” National Parks Traveler, October 8, 2012, accessed September 30, 2013; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2012/10/national-park-service-moving-engage-company-promote-2016-centennial10646> .

¹⁷⁰ “How Much Will Park Service Centennial Celebration Cost?” Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) website, accessed September 30, 2013; <http://www.peer.org/news/news-releases/2013/09/18/how-much-will-park-service-centennial-celebration-cost/> .

DUPLICATIVE & INEFFICIENT PROGRAMS

The federal government's \$3.5 trillion budget is rampant with duplicative programs and inefficient bureaucracies, and the National Park Service is no exception. The massive bureaucratic support structure of the NPS equates to an average of \$1.5 million in support and overhead costs for each of the 401 park units – larger than more than 150 individual park unit budgets. Despite the large administrative team, the individual park budgets are not disclosed and there is minimal transparency over NPS spending. This black box approach of park expenditures evades the public scrutiny necessary to ensure the proper stewardship of tax dollars.

The expanding role of NPS has also bled into similar initiatives of other federal entities, leaving a tangled, disorganized, and inefficient plan for the government to accomplish its intended purpose. A lack of congressional oversight has created a multitude of federal programs within and outside the NPS that handle historic preservation, international cultural sites, and Washington DC area monument planning. With a massive bureaucratic structure and broad ranging programs that overlap or duplicate the roles of other federal entities, the National Park Service exemplifies the problems when big government is combined with little oversight.

PRESERVING PARKS OR BUREAUCRACY? THE \$623 MILLION SUPPORT APPARATUS

The individual park unit is “the basic management entity of the National Park Service.”¹⁷¹ A park superintendent is in charge of a park unit (in some cases multiple park units). The superintendent's job is to “direct and control all program activities, including: interpretation and education; visitor services; resource management and protection; facility management; and other administrative functions, such as procurement, contracting, personnel, and financial management.”¹⁷²

The superintendents are able to accomplish these tasks with a total of \$1.3 billion in appropriated funds for operations directed amongst the 401 park units, or an average budget of \$3.4 million per park unit and an average staff size of 31 to 45 employees.¹⁷³ Staff positions include interpretive park rangers, park police, botanists, maintenance mechanics, archaeologists, historians, and facility managers. Nearly 50 of the park units have 100 or more employees, half of the park units have more than 30 employees, and 75 percent of the park units have 10 or more employees. With \$35.3 million in annual

¹⁷¹ “Organization,” National Park Service website, accessed July 31, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/organization.htm>.

¹⁷² “Organization,” National Park Service website, accessed July 31, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/organization.htm>.

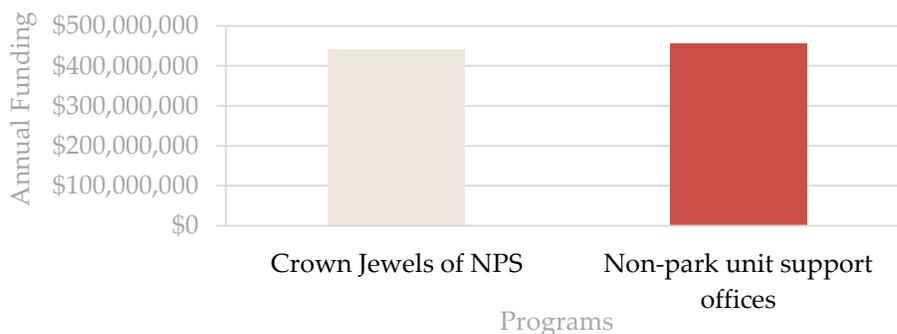
¹⁷³ The NPS Budget averages 30 Full-Time Equivalents(FTE) funded from park base operating dollars, and an average of 42 “Total FTE” when including FTE irrespective of funding source. Source: “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

funds and 298 park base staff, Yellowstone National Park has the largest budget of any unit.¹⁷⁴

A lack of funding for individual park operations causes superintendents to delay recurring maintenance needs, leading to a build-up in deferred maintenance projects. This build-up has accrued to an \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog. The easiest way to prevent the substantial disrepair in the parks is to adequately maintain parks to begin with. **Yet, only half of the funds appropriated by Congress even go to the park superintendents, while the national headquarters and regional offices consume more of the NPS budget than facility maintenance projects.**¹⁷⁵

Beyond the staff and funding at the individual park units, there is an expansive amount of administrative and specialty support offices and programs. In total, the NPS budget provides \$455 million to regional and service-wide support offices.¹⁷⁶ In comparison, the 59 National Parks representing the “crown jewels” of the park system receive \$442 million in annual general operation and maintenance funds. An additional \$168 million is needed for external administration costs such as space rental, postage, and centralized IT costs.¹⁷⁷

Resources for Crown Jewels vs. Support Offices



THE NPS PROVIDES MORE FUNDING FOR PARK SUPPORT OFFICES THAN THE 59 NATIONAL PARKS

¹⁷⁴ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013;

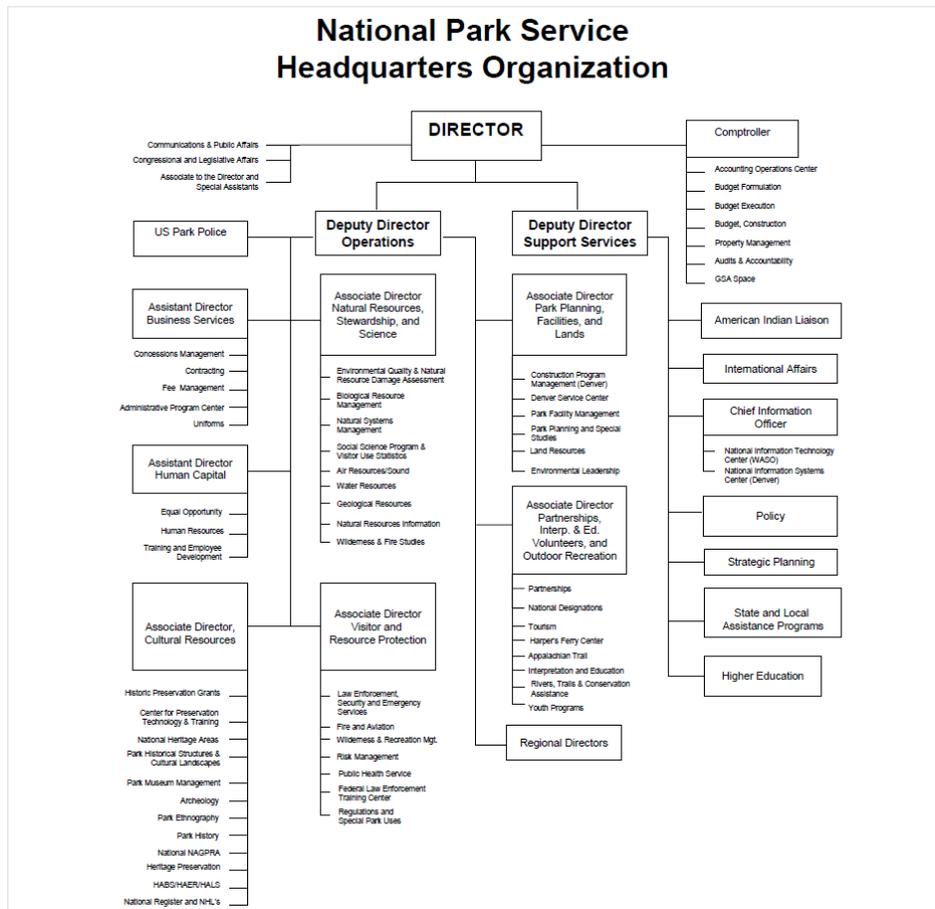
http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁷⁵ The central offices budget, consisting of the headquarters and seven regional offices, were allotted \$201 million in FY2012. Facility Maintenance Project Funds were allotted \$176 million. Source: “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁷⁶ Administrative units include regional support offices, conservation centers, training centers, and the Office of the Director. Daniel J. Stynes, “Economic Benefits to Local Communities from National Park Visitation and Payroll, 2010,” Natural Resource Report, National Park Service, December 2011; <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/NPSSystemEstimates2010.pdf>, and “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁷⁷ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

The National Park Service spends \$201 million annually and employs 1,598 employees for the National Park Service headquarters and seven regional offices.¹⁷⁸ The National Park Service headquarters in Washington DC is home to the Office of the Director and six Associate Directors. The headquarters receives \$91 million annually, or nearly triple the budget of Yellowstone National Park. The headquarters is responsible for providing “national level leadership and advocacy; policy and regulatory formulation and direction; program guidance; budget formulation; legislative support; accountability for programs and activities managed by the field and key program offices.”¹⁷⁹



ONE IN FIVE OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S 22,000 NPS EMPLOYEES WORK OUTSIDE OF ANY PARK UNIT.¹⁸⁰

In addition to the national level headquarters, there are seven regional offices, each headed by a regional director. These seven regional offices, including the National Capital Regional office located in a separate Washington DC facility from the headquarters, cost a total of **\$117.3 million** annually. The regional offices have more

¹⁷⁸ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013;

http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

¹⁷⁹ “Organization,” National Park Service website, accessed July 31, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/organization.htm>.

¹⁸⁰ “National Park Service Headquarters Organization,” Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=125307>.

than 1,200 staff members that are responsible for “strategic planning and direction, policy oversight, and assistance in public involvement, media relations, and strategies for parks and programs within the region.... As line manager, the regional director is also responsible for program coordination, budget formulation and financial management.”¹⁸¹



THE NPS SPENDS \$201 MILLION ON THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND SEVEN REGIONAL OFFICES LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES

¹⁸¹ “Organization,” National Park Service website; <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/organization.htm> .

The \$1.3 billion allocated directly to the 401-individual park units along with the \$201 million for the national headquarters and seven regional offices falls short of the bureaucratic support needs to operate the National Park System. NPS spends an

NPS Natural Sounds Program

NPS spends \$3.4 million per year for a Natural Sounds Program, which works to “protect, maintain, or restore acoustical environments throughout the National Park System.” The program produces documents that provide practical advice such as “visitors and park employees can improve their natural and cultural soundscape experience in our national parks by simply becoming more aware of the sounds around them.”



A MICROPHONE IS SET UP IN GRAND SAND DUNES NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE AS PART OF THE \$3.4 MILLION NATURAL SOUNDS SUPPORT OFFICE.

additional **\$253 million** on more support offices that assist with specialized functions such as administrative, natural resource, cultural, facility maintenance, interpretation and education, and visitor protection. For example, the NPS spends \$4 million annually for field resource centers, \$17.1 million annually for the Servicing Human Resources Office and \$14.5 million annually for a Facility Management Software System.¹⁸²

Administrative or Support Offices	FY2012 Funding	Employees
HQ & Regional Offices	\$201,386,000	1,598
Park Administrative Support	\$101,080,000	417
Park Natural Resource Support	\$99,349,000	476
Park Cultural Resource Support	\$5,344,000	65
Park Facility Maintenance Support	\$28,631,000	20
Park Interpretation & Education Support	\$7,625,000	34
Park Visitor Protection Support	\$10,779,000	49
Youth Partnership Programs	\$574,000	1
External Administrative Costs	\$168,919,000	0
Total FY2012 Support/Admin Funding	\$623,687,000	2,660

NPS SPENDS \$623.6 MILLION IN TOTAL ON NON-PARK UNIT SUPPORT OFFICES, THE BULK OF WHICH IS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

Despite the \$117.3 million and more than 1,200 employees at the seven regional offices whose task, in part, is “budget formulation and financial management,” the National Park Service spends \$101 million on park administrative support offices.¹⁸³ This includes an \$11 million

¹⁸² “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁸³ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

accounting operations center, a \$7.6 million human resources center, and a \$4.5 million park concession program.¹⁸⁴

Administrative Support Offices and Programs	FY2012 Budget	Employees
Accounting Operations Center	\$11,691,000	134
Park Concession Program	\$4,568,000	26
Human Resources Operation Center	\$7,690,000	75
Information Technology Programs	\$23,723,000	87
Major Acquisition Buying Offices	\$16,452,000	0
Servicing Human Resources Office	\$17,154,000	0
Learning and Development Program	\$15,635,000	83
Federal Law Enforcement Training Center	\$4,167,000	12
Park Administrative Support Totals	\$101,080,000	417

EVEN WITH MORE THAN 30 EMPLOYEES PER PARK AND ANOTHER 1500 EMPLOYEES IN THE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS AND THE SEVEN REGIONAL OFFICES, NPS HAS ANOTHER 417 EMPLOYEES AND SPENDS AN ADDITIONAL \$101 MILLION FOR SPECIALTY ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.

The \$623 million spent on support and administrative costs equates to an average of \$1.55 million in overhead costs for each of the 401 park units. The \$1.55 million average in support costs per unit is more than the amount provided annually for more than 150 individual park units.

With a total of 5,557 administrative employees in 2009, one in every five National Park employees works outside of any National Park unit. The administrative employees' average salary and benefits are more than \$79,000 annually.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

¹⁸⁵ Administrative units include regional support offices, conservation centers, training centers, and the Office of the Director. Daniel J. Stynes, "Economic Benefits to Local Communities from National Park Visitation and Payroll, 2009," Natural Resource Report, National Park Service, December 2010; <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/NPSSystemEstimates2009.pdf>.



LAYERS OF BUREAUCRACY REQUIRE \$1.55 MILLION IN SUPPORT COSTS PER PARK UNIT

Even with several layers of administrative park service staff, there is minimal transparency in the park service budgets. **Individual park units spend \$1.3 billion without disclosing how those funds are spent or documenting what functions the park staffs perform.** The only public information released for each park is a single line in the annual NPS budget, providing information about the overall funding and the amount of full-time employees for each park unit.

OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM	2012 Park Base FTE ¹	2012 Total FTE ²	2013 Full Yr. CR (PL 112-175) ³	2012 Enacted ³	Costs and Internal Transfers	Program Changes	2014 Request
Yellowstone NP	298	557	35,252	35,301	471	-515	35,257
Yosemite NP	277	689	28,968	29,007	436	1,356	30,799

TAXPAYERS ARE PROVIDED MINIMAL INFORMATION ABOUT HOW THEIR TAX DOLLARS ARE USED IN NATIONAL PARKS. A SINGLE FIGURE INCLUDED IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET IS THE ONLY INFORMATION DIVULGED ABOUT \$1.3 BILLION IN TAXPAYER FUNDS

This opaque structure makes it difficult for the American people to examine if their tax dollars are being used to carry out the mission of protecting America’s heritage, or being wasted on non-essential activities. For example, in order to implement the five percent budget reduction as result of sequestration, Grand Canyon Nation Park was able to cut \$35,000 in non-essential overtime pay, \$65,000 on employee recognition events, and \$200,000 on “unnecessary purchases.”¹⁸⁶ With more transparency and oversight, \$300,000 per year in low priority or unnecessary spending could have been directed towards the canyon’s \$1 million annual shortfall in trail maintenance work.

There is no justification that a park unit can produce a 2,400 page public document on dog walking options in Golden Gate National Recreation Area but cannot disclose the park unit’s operating budget.¹⁸⁷ The American people should be able to examine if the

¹⁸⁶ Clara Beard, “Sequestration cuts to affect Grand Canyon employees more than visitors,” Grand Canyon News, April 23, 2013; <http://www.grandcanyonnews.com/main.asp?SectionID=1&SubSectionID=717&ArticleID=10345> .

¹⁸⁷ “GGNRA Draft Dog Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement,” National Park Service website, accessed August 12, 2013; <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=303&projectID=11759&documentID=38106#content> .

individual, regional and national park offices are being good stewards of their tax dollars.

Transparency is especially critical given that that the current NPS configuration with a massive support staff has been unable to formulate a plan to stem the constantly growing \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog. Perhaps transparency at every level will shed light on areas ripe for streamlining or elimination that can be redirected towards protecting visitors' experience and safety at our national parks.



A PARK UNIT PUBLISHED A 2400 PAGE PLAN ON DOG WALKING OPTIONS IN GOLDEN GATE NRA, BUT ONLY DISCLOSES A SINGLE FIGURE FOR ITS \$25.6 MILLION ANNUAL BUDGET.

Example of Individual Park Unit Staff Performing Same Functions as the \$400+ million non-park support offices

As documented in this section of the report, the 401 park unit superintendents have substantial resources and staff available in national, regional, and specialty offices to assist in the operation of the park units. However, with an average staff size of 35 to 47 employees, many park units already employ people that perform the same tasks as employees in the non-park support offices. For example, Catoctin Mountain Park in Maryland has an annual budget of \$3.4 million with 33 park base employees. Catoctin Mountain Park directly employs the following teams and divisions that facilitate functions that duplicate the services provided by NPS support offices:

-Park management team for “Park planning, accountability, records management, permits, and Freedom of Information Act request...”

-Administration officer who coordinates “budget formulation, expenditures and tracking and purchasing. Contracting, human resources, property management, and information technology...”

-Visitor Protection and Resource Education division that is responsible for “the protection of visitors, the protection of park resources, the safety of our visitors, search and rescue operations, emergency medical services, and law enforcement” and “provides interpretive and educational programs for our general visitors and for organized groups...”

-Resource management operations work “to preserve and protect both the natural and cultural resources of the park through inventory and monitoring programs and coordinating research in the park.”

-Facilities manager that provides “building cleaning, snow removal, equipment and vehicle maintenance and repair, sign construction, and trail work.... Plumbing repairs, electrical repairs, and historic preservation work...”

188

¹⁸⁸ “Our Staff & Offices,” National Park Service website, accessed on August 1, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/cato/parkmgmt/staffandoffices.htm>.

DUPLICATIVE DESIGNATIONS INCREASE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM COSTS

The official total number of park units in NPS is 401. However, a closer look finds multiple designations for a single area, the physical embodiment of duplication in the National Park System. As evidenced by duplicative designations and overlapping administration, Congress has not even been able to adequately manage the establishment of national park units.

For instance, Alaska officially has 23 of the 401 National Park units. However, there are seven National Park and Preserves that count as two separate units despite sharing a name, geographic area, and management.¹⁸⁹

NPS Park Units by Region			
Alaska			
1. Alagnak Wild River	7. Denali NPres	13. Katmai NPres	19. Noatak NPres
2. Aniakchak NM	8. Gates of the Arctic NP	14. Kenai Fjords NP	20. Sitka NHP
3. Aniakchak NPres	9. Gates of the Arctic NPres	15. Klondike Gold Rush NHP	21. Wrangell-Saint Elias NP
4. Bering Land Bridge NPres	10. Glacier Bay NP	16. Kobuk Valley NP	22. Wrangell-Saint Elias NPres
5. Cape Krusenstern NM	11. Glacier Bay NPres	17. Lake Clark NP	23. Yukon-Charley Rivers NPres
6. Denali NP	12. Katmai NP	18. Lake Clark NPres	

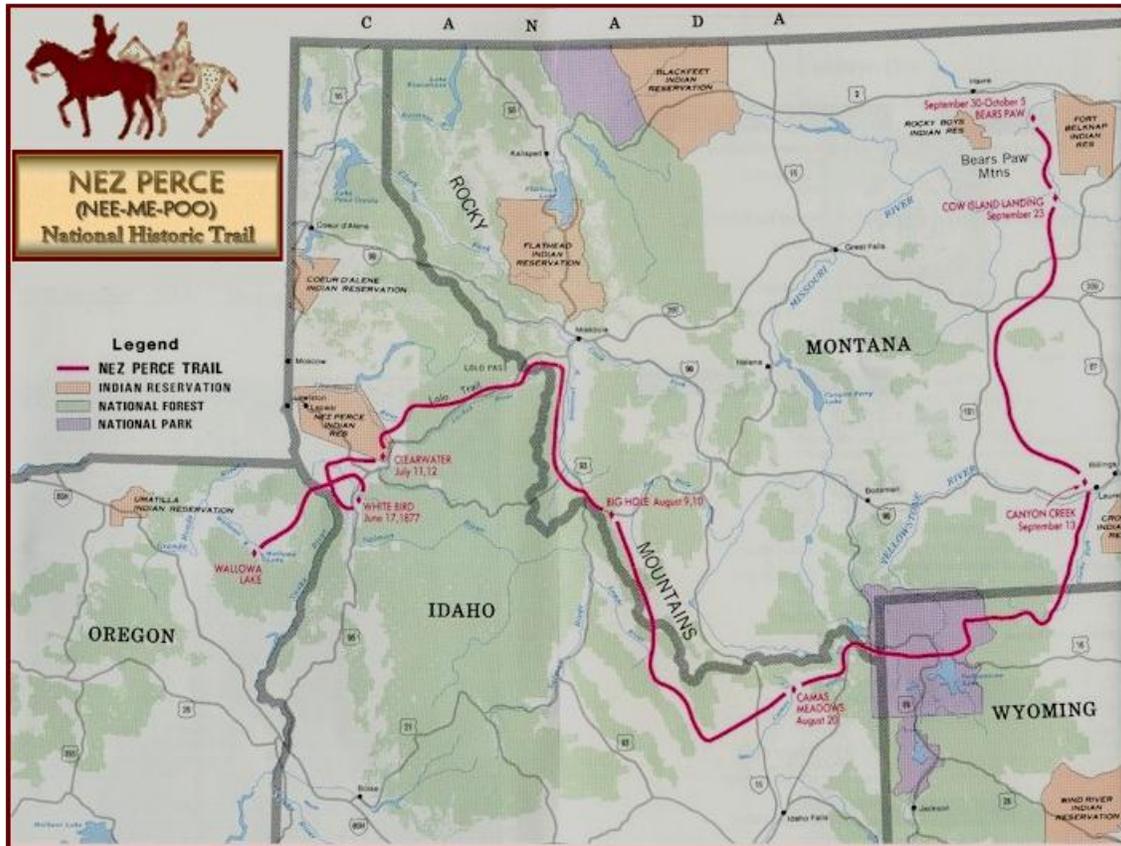
Big Hole National Battlefield in Montana is one of 38 individual sites within Nez Perce National Historic Park, but the National Park Service counts both Big Hole and Nez Perce as two separate park units.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, Big Hole National Battlefield is a stop on Nez Perce National Historic Trail, which is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. This results in three separate annual funding streams from two federal agencies for one site. For FY2013, the National Park Service budget allotted \$2.6 million and \$608,000 to Nez Perce National Historic Site and Big Hole National Battlefield, respectively.¹⁹¹ The U.S. Forest Service provided \$640,000 to the site as part of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

¹⁹⁰ Bob Janiske, “Are There Really 391 Units in the National Park System? You Won’t Think So After You Read This,” National Parks Traveler, September 29, 2008; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2008/09/are-there-really-391-units-national-park-system-you-won-t-think-so-after-you-read>.

¹⁹¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

¹⁹² “Forest Service Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Justifications,” Department of Agriculture; <http://www.fs.fed.us/aboutus/budget/2013/fy2013-justification.pdf>.



WITH THREE SEPARATE ANNUAL FUNDING STREAMS FROM TWO FEDERAL AGENCIES FOR ONE SITE, NEZ PERCE DEMONSTRATES THE OVERLAP AND DUPLICATION WITHIN FEDERAL LANDS MANAGEMENT.

The Montana duplication is not an aberration, as the Golden Gate National Recreation Area also encompasses 15 individual sites, including Alcatraz Island. However, two of these, Muir Woods National Monument and Fort Point National Historic Site, count as separate National Park units from the Golden Gate NRA. Again, there are three separate park units in one geographic area, creating three separate annual funding streams and accompanying administrations: \$446,000 and 9 employees for Muir Woods NM, \$531,000 and 4 employees for Fort Point NHS, and \$25.6 million and 226 employees for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.



THERE ARE THREE SEPARATE PARK UNITS IN ONE GEOGRAPHIC AREA, THE GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA, EACH WITH ITS OWN FUNDING STREAM AND ACCOMPANYING ADMINISTRATION

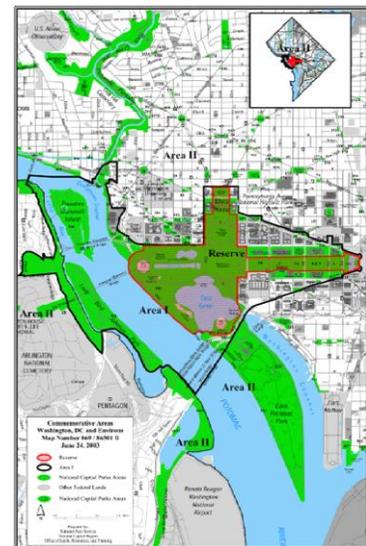
The duplicative designations and their accompanying overlapping administrations should be consolidated for efficiency and to free up resources in the form of money and manpower that can be used to address the deferred maintenance backlog.

OVERLAPPING ROLES RIGHT OUTSIDE CONGRESS' WINDOWS

The National Park Service's management footprint on the Washington DC area and National Mall is enormous. The total NPS annual investment in the capital area is **\$147 million**, which is comprised of the National Headquarters (\$83.5 million), the National Capital Regional Office (\$13.3 million), the National Capital Parks-East (\$16.4 million), and the National Mall & Memorial Parks (\$33.8 million). Beyond this substantial annual investment from NPS, Congress has designated three other federal agencies to make decisions regarding memorial planning in the capital area.

The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) is the “central planning agency for the Federal Government in the National Capital Region.” The **\$8.1 million** spent annually on the NCPC “helps guide Federal development, preserving the Capital City's unique resources through study, analysis, and advance planning.”¹⁹⁴

The U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) is an independent federal agency that provides “expert advice to the President, Congress and the heads of departments and agencies of the Federal and District of Columbia governments on matters of design and aesthetics, as they affect the Federal interest and preserve the dignity of the nation's capital.” The CFA has the authority to “advise upon the location of statues, fountains, and monuments in the public squares, streets, and parks in the District of Columbia, and upon the selection of models for statues, fountains, and monuments erected under the authority of the United States and upon the selection of artists for the execution of the same.”¹⁹⁵ The commission receives **\$2 million** annually in federal funds.



The National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission is yet another independent federal agency whose role is to “advise the Secretary of the Interior and the Administrator of General Services (as appropriate) on policy and procedures for establishment of, and proposals to establish, commemorative works in the District of Columbia and its environs and on other matters concerning commemorative works in the Nation's Capital.” The commission, which operates without federal funds, examines “each memorial proposal for conformance to the Commemorative Works Act, and make ... recommendations to the Secretary and the Administrator and to Members and

¹⁹⁴ “Other Independent Agencies,” The Appendix, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2014; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2014/assets/oia.pdf>.

¹⁹⁵ Jacob R. Straus, “Commemorative Works in the District of Columbia: Background and Practice,” Congressional Research Service, June 3, 2013.

Committees of Congress. The Commission also serves as a source of information for persons seeking to establish memorials in Washington, DC and its environs.”¹⁹⁶

There is no doubting the importance of appropriately establishing and planning monuments and memorials in the capital area. However, it is unclear if it necessitates four separate federal entities to accomplish the task.

THE DUPLICATIVE INTERNATIONAL PARK AFFAIRS PROGRAM

While most would likely assume that America’s *National* Park Service only funds *national* activities, that assumption is incorrect. The NPS spends \$1.65 million annually on its International Park Affairs program, comprised of the Office of International Affairs and the Southwest Border Resource Protection Program. These programs funds are used for “the conservation and protection of natural and cultural resources and associated values, the restoration and maintenance of the condition of these resources, and the ability of the NPS to collaborate effectively with partners to achieve these goals.”¹⁹⁷ The projects funded by these programs often duplicate other federal initiatives or do not rise to the importance to compete against other needs within the NPS.

The Office of International Affairs (OIA) is the “NPS focal point for international activities and serves as the primary contact for other DOI bureaus, agencies, foreign governments, and international and private organizations on park and conservation related matters.”¹⁹⁸ The \$898,000 program supports World Heritage Sites, provides technical assistance for foreign national parks including a “sister park” program, develops long-term conservation and resource management programs with key international partners, and serves as the NPS point of contact for official international visitors.

The international technical assistance projects “demonstrates the full-range commitment of the Park Service in its contributions to global environmental conservation.”¹⁹⁹ Examples of projects include a management plan to protect the endangered panda population in Sichuan province in China and a migratory bird protection program called Park Flight and Migratory Bird Conservation.^{200 201}

¹⁹⁶ Jacob R. Straus, “Commemorative Works in the District of Columbia: Background and Practice,” Congressional Research Service, June 3, 2013.

¹⁹⁷ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁹⁸ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

¹⁹⁹ Office of International Affairs- Program Topics,” National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/topics.htm>.

²⁰⁰ “NPS Technical Assistance & Exchange,” National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/oia/topics/techassist/techassist.htm>.

²⁰¹ “Park Flight and Migratory Bird Conservation,” National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.nature.nps.gov/biology/migratorybirds/parkflightenglish.pdf>.

NPS's parent agency, the Department of Interior, has a similar program called the International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP). DOI-ITAP partners with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to utilize funds from “sources such as USAID, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the U.S. State Department” to provide Interior expertise for capacity building in foreign countries.²⁰² These capacity building activities include “on-site technical assistance, study tours, mentoring, train-the-trainers workshops, procurement, and training in operations and maintenance of equipment.”²⁰³ Since its creation in 1995, the duplicative DOI-ITAP program has provided more than \$35 million in funds to 52 countries.²⁰⁴

The DOI-ITAP is not the only other federal agency to provide environmental and conservation funding for foreign countries. In FY2012, the United States contributed a substantial sum for similar projects in foreign countries, including:

- ❖ The U.S. Agency for International Development obligated **\$617.3 million** in foreign aid for environmental programs;²⁰⁵
- ❖ The State Department contributed **\$119.8 million** to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), an independent and international financial organization that funds projects related to “biodiversity, climate change, international waters, ozone layer depletion, land degradation, and persistent organic pollutants.”²⁰⁶
- ❖ The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) spent **\$12.9 million** on international conservation and international wildlife trade programs, including the Wildlife Without Borders program comprised of 10 grant programs that fund international wildlife conservation projects.^{207 208}

The NPS Office of International Affairs (OIA) also supports and administers the United States participation in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the World Heritage Convention). The World Heritage Convention “identifies and helps protect international sites of such exceptional ecological, scientific, or cultural importance that their preservation is considered a

²⁰² “International Technical Assistance Program,” National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.doi.gov/intl/itap/index.cfm>.

²⁰³ “International Technical Assistance Program,” National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.doi.gov/intl/itap/index.cfm>.

²⁰⁴ “International Technical Assistance Program,” National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.doi.gov/intl/itap/index.cfm>.

²⁰⁵ “WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?” USAID website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/budget-spending/where-does-money-go>.

²⁰⁶ Richard K. Lattanzio, “International Environmental Financing: The Global Environment Facility (GEF),” Congressional Research Service, June 3, 2013.

²⁰⁷ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” Fish and Wildlife Service, 2013; <http://www.fws.gov/budget/2014/FWS%202014%20Budget%20Justifications.pdf>.

²⁰⁸ “Grants and Reporting,” Fish and Wildlife Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.fws.gov/international/grants-and-reporting/>.

global responsibility.”²⁰⁹ The current World Heritage List consists of 936 natural and cultural sites in 153 countries, including 21 sites in the United States.

While the OIA supports and administers the World Heritage Program, several other federal programs provide funding for the same or similar activities. The U.S. State Department’s Cultural Heritage Center supports the functions of the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, which provides millions of dollars in grants each year to support “the preservation of cultural sites, cultural objects, and forms of traditional cultural expression in more than 100 developing countries around the world.”²¹⁰

Since 2001, the Ambassador’s fund has provided more than \$26 million for 640 international projects, including \$9 million for 127 projects at World Heritage Sites.²¹¹ ²¹² These include projects for World Heritage sites, such as Forest of the Cedars of God in Lebanon, Chan Chan Archaeological Zone in Panama, and Medina of Tunis in Tunisia. The State Department’s Cultural Heritage Center also “administers U.S. responsibilities relating to the 1970 UNESCO convention to reduce pillage and illicit trafficking in cultural property.”²¹³

Federal funding for World Heritage sites come from a variety of agencies and programs. Between the years 2003 and 2008, the following US Agencies provided support for a World Heritage Site²¹⁴:

- ❖ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
- ❖ Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation
- ❖ Department of Interior’s International Technical Assistance Program (DOI-ITAP)
- ❖ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
- ❖ United States Diplomatic Mission to South Africa
- ❖ NPS Natural Sounds Program Center
- ❖ NPS Office of International Affairs

The OIA states it continues to “closely monitor and evaluate NPS international travel, ensuring such travel is consistent with the NPS mission and Service priorities, is cost-effective, and results in tangible benefits to both the Service’s international partners and the NPS itself.”²¹⁵ As part of the OIA program, the National Park Service sends a

²⁰⁹Luisa Blanchfield, “The UNESCO World Heritage Convention: Congressional Issues,” Congressional Research Service, July 20, 2011.

²¹⁰ “Ambassadors Fund For Cultural Preservation,” State Department website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://eca.state.gov/cultural-heritage-center/ambassadors-fund-cultural-preservation> .

²¹¹ Luisa Blanchfield, “The UNESCO World Heritage Convention: Congressional Issues,” Congressional Research Service, July 20, 2011.

²¹² “AFCP Support for World Heritage,” Google earth website, accessed August 14, 2013; <https://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msid=213199230475049281731.0004bd591f934d5d128ef&msa=0> .

²¹³ “The U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation: Annual 10-11 Report,” United States Department of State; http://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/afcp_2010_annual_report.pdf .

²¹⁴ “U.S. Assistance to World Heritage Sites,” National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/oia/NewWebpages/WHAssistance2.html> .

²¹⁵ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

representative to the Sondrio International Film Festival of Parks, an Italian film festival that features films about parks and protected areas. For most of the years since the film festival's inception, a representative from NPS "has participated as a juror and spokesperson about U.S. national parks."²¹⁶ A park ranger from Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park traveled to Italy in 2011 for the Sondrio's 25th annual film festival.



NPS ranger with fellow members of the film jury for the 2011 Sondrio Film Festival.

THE NPS OFTEN SENDS A PARK RANGER TO JUDGE AN ITALIAN FILM FESTIVAL. IT IS UNCLEAR IF THIS TRAVEL REACHES THE CRITERIA LAID OUT BY THE NPS AS PROVIDING "TANGIBLE BENEFITS TO BOTH THE SERVICE'S INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS AND THE NPS ITSELF."

Another travel expenditure of questionable value was a trip by the NPS Structural Fire Management Officer to the National Fire Protection Association meeting in Venice, Italy. During the three-day visit to the popular tourist destination, the NPS employee was informed about Venetian "fire protection challenges and operations."²¹⁷

The other International Affairs program, the Southwest Border Resource Protection Program, augments the efforts of the ten park units located along the southern border with technical and financial assistance to "achieve common goals with our Mexican partners, maintain cooperative relationships, mitigate impacts on cultural and natural resources, engage new partners, communities and visitors in shared environmental stewardship, and increase appreciation and understanding of our shared cultural heritage."²¹⁸ The program works towards this initiative by providing grants to any park unit in the intermountain region area, along with other government entities, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations.

²¹⁶ "International Programs Bulletin: October-December 2011," National Park Service website, accessed August 13, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/oia/new/QB/Oct_Dec_11.pdf.

²¹⁷ "NPS Technical Assistance Around the World," National Park Service website, accessed August 14, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/oia/around/around.htm>.

²¹⁸ "Southwest Border Resource Protection Program (SWBRPP) Guidelines and Selection Criteria," link on National Park Service website, accessed August 12, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/partnerships/SWBRPP_Mission_Guidelines.htm.

A similar initiative is already underway through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA Administrator and Mexico's Secretary for the Environment and Natural Resources signed the Border 2020 U.S.-Mexico Environmental program agreement on August 8, 2012. According to the EPA, the agreement seeks to address environmental and public health problems along the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border. Border 2020 involves multijurisdictional cooperation between the United States EPA, Mexico's SEMARNAT (Mexico's EPA counterpart), the four U.S. border states and the six Mexican border states along with 26 U.S. border tribes. The initial framework began in 1983 under the La Paz Agreement signed by President Reagan and Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid.²¹⁹

The EPA provides about \$4.3 million annually for the Border Plan initiatives, including for infrastructure development. State and local government funding, along with public/private partnerships, also contribute to the funding of Border 2020. In addition, the program receives funding through the North American Development Bank (NADBank), which was created under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to confront environmental issues along the U.S.-Mexico border.²²⁰ NADBank is funded through both Mexico and the United States' financing of the NAFTA agreement.

The NPS should refocus its efforts on providing quality parks in the United States rather than duplicating the efforts of other federal agencies and programs in foreign countries.

SCHOOLHOUSE WASTE: NPS EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The National Park Service has partnered with the NYC Department of Education and the Lower Eastside Tenement Museum to open the Stephen T. Mather Building Arts & Craftsmanship High in New York City. Opened in the fall of 2013, the career and technical education high school is the “brainchild” of the NPS with the mission to “prepare students for careers, college and citizenship through hands-on exploration and skills-training in the historical preservation and conservation trades.”²²¹ The NPS provided \$49,000 in September 2013 to support the Mather T High School and will continue to collaborate with the New York City Department of Education and the Lower

²¹⁹ “EPA, Border 2020: U.S.-Mexico Environmental Program,” EPA website, <http://www.epa.gov/border2020/pdf/border2020summary.pdf>.

²²⁰ “EPA, Border 2020: U.S.-Mexico Environmental Program,” EPA website, <http://www.epa.gov/border2020/pdf/border2020summary.pdf>.

²²¹ “Stephen T. Mather Building Arts & Craftsmanship High School,” Inside Schools website, accessed September 29, 2013; <http://insideschools.org/high/browse/school/8252> and NPS-13-NERO-0144 Notice of Intent to Award: Mather HS Program, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=NPS-13-NERO-0144>.

Eastside Tenement Museum (the museum is an affiliated area that receives \$252,000 annually from NPS).²²²

The NPS also spends \$375,000 annually on the Heritage Education Services (HES) program. HES program supports Teaching with Historic Places, an initiative that provides “educators with a series of online curriculum based lesson plans, training and technical assistance on using historic places in education, and a professional development website entitled “Teaching Teachers the Power of Place.” NPS recently launched a new website that provides lesson plans for teachers in more than 125 subjects, including “archeology, biology and constitutional law.”²²³

Given the questionable role of education in the federal government, and the Department of Education already spending \$45.3 billion in federal tax dollars annually, it’s doubtful that NPS is the optimal source to provide lesson plans on constitutional law.²²⁴

FEDERAL FUNDING PAVES THE WAY FOR FEDERAL TAX BREAKS: NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

The National Register of Historic Places, created by Congress, is deemed the “official inventory of historic places that have been determined to be worthy of preservation.” The National Register consists of over 80,000 listings covering 1.4 million entities that are the “districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.”²²⁵ The National Register honors everything from bowling alleys, putt putt courses, giant animal structures, and Butler Cabin within the private grounds of Augusta National Golf Course. While placing a National Register of Historic Places plaque on a building may be a point of pride for some property owners, with such an expansive listing that grows by more than one thousand new listings per year, one must question its value relative to the large taxpayer commitment.

²²² NPS-13-NEO-0144: Notice of Intent to Award: Mather HS Program, National Park Service — Department of the Interior, Grants Notice; <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=NPS-13-NEO-0144> and “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²²³ “Website brings parks into classroom,” The Olympian, September 22, 2013; <http://www.theolympian.com/2013/09/22/2736416/website-brings-parks-into-classroom.html>.

²²⁴ Department of Education Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Summary and Background Information, <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget14/summary/14summary.pdf>.

²²⁵ P.L. 89-665, §101; 16 U.S.C. §470a(a)(1)(A).



LUCY THE ELEPHANT IS LISTED ON THE NATIONAL PARK REGISTRY OF HISTORICAL LANDMARKS.²²⁶ THE BIG DUCK OF FLANDERS, NEW YORK, WAS LISTED ON THE NATIONAL PARK REGISTRY OF HISTORICAL LANDMARKS. "ULTIMATELY, MANY CIVIC LEADERS AND PRESERVATIONISTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE ENTIRE SITE TURNED INTO A PARK."²²⁷

A property listed on the National Register gets federal support throughout the entire process of nomination to development, **with the federal government spending up to \$63.3 million in administrative costs to dole out \$600 million in tax breaks.**

1) **Nominations:** The NPS budget includes **\$46.9 million** for grants-in-aid to state and territories through the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) that are used by states and territories for multiple state and local preservation activities, including National Register nominations. In FY2011, HPF funds were used to review 140,600 federal undertakings providing 104,700 National Register eligibility options.²²⁸

2) **Designations:** The National Park Service employs about 70 people and spends **\$9.59 million** annually assessing and awarding designations to the National Register of Historic Places and the National Historic Landmarks Program.²²⁹ NPS plans to designate an additional 1,100 properties to the National Register in FY2014.²³⁰

3) **Protection:** The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) is an independent federal agency that receives **\$6.5 million** in federal funding every year to "advise the President and the Congress on national historic preservation policy" while promoting historic preservation nationwide.²³¹ The key task of the ACHP is to enforce

²²⁶ "The World's Greatest Elephant," Lucy website, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.lucytheelephant.org/?presets=preset5>.

²²⁷ Andrea Aurichio, "Big Duck's Bid For Historic Landmark Status Testament To Farming Ingenuity," Hamptons Online, January 4, 2008; <http://www.hamptons.com/Community/Main-Articles/2608/Big-Ducks-Bid-For-Historic-Landmark-Status.html#.Ue2mLo2kqtY>.

²²⁸ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²²⁹ Email from Congressional Research Service to the office of Senator Tom Coburn, September 12, 2013.

²³⁰ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²³¹ "Other Independent Agencies," White House FY2014 budget; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2014/assets/oia.pdf>.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which requires federal agencies to receive a comment from the ACHP while planning any federal, federally licensed, or federally assisted projects that may affect properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register.²³²

4) **Development:** A listing on the National Register of Historic Places makes a site eligible for the Historic Preservation Tax Credit, a tax credit worth 20 percent of the renovation costs on a non-residential National Register building. In order for the rehabilitation projects to be eligible for the tax credit, they must be approved by NPS through the Technical Preservation Services program, which costs **\$367,000** per year. On top of the administrative spending, the Historic Preservation Tax Credits cost the federal government **\$600 million** in lost revenue in 2012.²³³ While NPS boasts that the tax credit has a 5 to 1 benefit-cost ratio, those results should be expected with a 20 percent tax credit. The Historic Preservation Tax Credit has been used for professional baseball stadiums (including a reported \$40 million in tax credits for renovation at Fenway Park)²³⁴, beer gardens and breweries²³⁵, and a private golf country club.²³⁶



THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDS UP TO \$63.3 MILLION IN ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS TO DOLE OUT \$600 MILLION IN TAX BREAKS

²³² Kristina Alexander, “A Section 106 Review Under the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA): How It Works,” Congressional Research Service, January 17, 2013.

²³³ “Tax Expenditures Compendium of Background Material on Individual Provisions,” Committee on the Budget United States Senate, prepared by the Congressional Research Service, December 2012.

²³⁴ Ameet Sachdev, “Wrigley Field owners pursue federal landmark status for tax breaks,” Chicago Tribune, April 18, 2013; http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-04-18/business/ct-biz-0418-wrigley-landmark-20130418_1_tax-breaks-wrigley-field-tax-incentives .

²³⁵ Kelly Robert, “Beer garden, microbrewery set to open at old Coke plant,” Post-Dispatch (St. Louis, MO), May 27, 2011; http://www.stltoday.com/business/local/article_14056e5f-5086-5fef-a26f-e4e0d98ff791.html .

²³⁶ “Check Project Status,” Technical Preservation Services website, search project number 13,661: Norwood Hills Country Club; <http://tps.cr.nps.gov/status/results.CFM> .

NPS Casino Development

The Historic Preservation Tax Credit has also been utilized by a National Basketball Association (NBA) owner for the development of a casino in downtown Cleveland. The National Park Service had to intervene in plans by the Horseshoe Casino within the historic Higbee Building to build a skywalk connecting the casino to a parking garage. The National Park Service ruled that the skywalk would detract from “the overall historic character of the property,” rendering the casino ineligible for the federal tax credit. The skywalk connection was ruled out of order, but taxpayers may be left wondering why the National Park Service was ever connected to the casino development business in the first place.



LACK OF PRIORITIZATION

Congress and the administration have been incapable of setting an agenda that addresses the highest priority items for our National Park System first. For example, Congress and the administration are content with placing more property under NPS management every year while the access, safety, and visitors' experience on existing property continue to diminish. NPS also lacks a rational recreational fee system that maximizes the ability for parks to invest visitor-supported funds for fixing the parks while maintaining affordability. Worst of all, the Administration has identified and disclosed a \$256 million gap in annual maintenance funding, yet has not proposed any strategy to address it. Instead, the Administration's budget proposal maintains the current massive funding shortfall, while its long-term goals call for more parks and property. The unsustainable growth in the maintenance backlog is not a problem that is going to solve itself. Without a cogent plan, it will only get exponentially worse.

PILING ON OVER PRIORITIES: COMPOUNDING THE PROBLEM WITH MORE LAND ACQUISITION AND PARK STUDIES

The federal government owns about 650 million acres of land, which equates to about 29 percent of all the land in the United States.²³⁷ Despite accumulating maintenance needs on our existing federal lands base, the federal government continues to purchase additional land every year, primarily through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The LWCF uses revenues from oil and gas leasing in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) to fund land acquisition for the four federal lands agencies,²³⁸ along with state assistance grants for "recreational planning, acquiring recreational lands and waters, and developing outdoor recreational facilities."²³⁹ **Inexplicably, the LWCF funds cannot be used to tend to the urgent maintenance needs for the existing federal land base – they can only be used to expand it.**

Annual funding for LWCF has fluctuated between \$255 and \$529 million over the last 10 years, averaging \$380 million for land acquisition annually. Meanwhile, the deferred maintenance backlog on federal lands has grown to more than \$20 billion.²⁴⁰ Acquiring hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of land every year not only comes with commensurate maintenance responsibilities, but it also spreads the resources to take care of these needs even further. The LWCF's expansion only policy creates a compounding problem that confounds common sense.

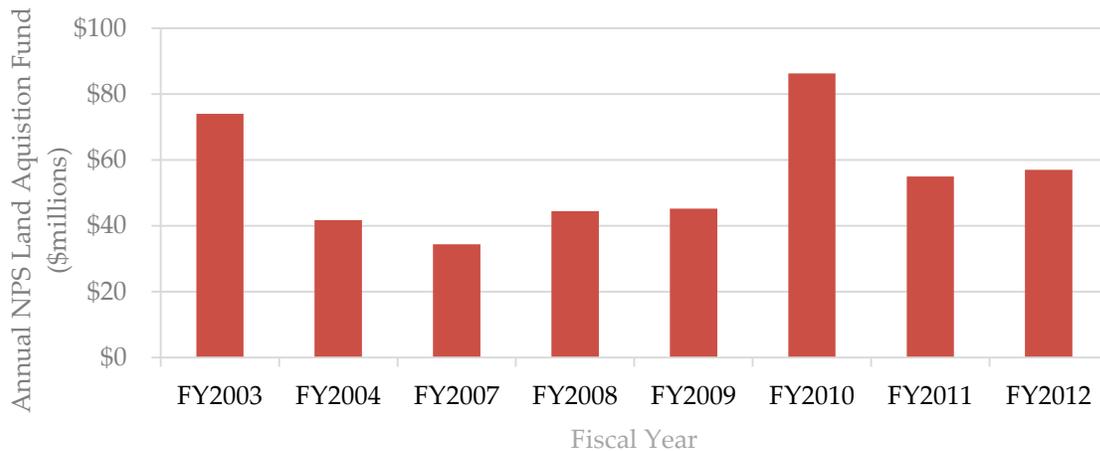
²³⁷ Ross W. Gorte, "Federal Land Management Agencies: Background on Land and Resources Management," Congressional Research Service, February 9, 2009.

²³⁸ National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service

²³⁹ Carol Hardy Vincent, "Land and Water Conservation Fund: Overview, Funding History, and Issues," Congressional Research Service, March 5, 2013.

²⁴⁰ Email from Congressional Research Service to the office of Senator Tom Coburn, April 6, 2012.

National Park Service Land Acquisition Funding



OVER THE LAST DECADE, THE COST OF NEEDED REPAIRS ON NATIONAL PARK SERVICE LANDS INCREASED BY \$5.4 BILLION. DURING THIS SAME PERIOD CONGRESS APPROPRIATED OVER HALF-A-BILLION DOLLARS TO ACQUIRE EVEN MORE LAND.

The compounding LWCF problem is especially true in the case of the National Park Service, which holds an \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog that continues to rapidly rise every year. Over the last decade, Congress has appropriated \$527.4 million through the LWCF to acquire more land for the National Park Service. During that period, the needed repairs on existing NPS land increased by \$5.4 billion. This policy is in contradiction with the “fix it first” strategy. No one builds an addition to his or her house when the roof is caving in. Nor should their government.

In December 2012, the National Park Service spent \$16 million to acquire 86 acres of land in Grand Teton National Park from the state of Wyoming at a cost of \$186,047 per acre.²⁴¹ In comparison, the average value of farm and ranch real estate in Wyoming was \$540 per acre in 2011.²⁴² NPS plans to continue to purchase 1280 acres of land from the state of Wyoming in two installments totaling \$91 million.²⁴³ In total, the federal government will spend \$107 million to add 1366 acres to the 310,000 acre Grand Teton National Park, expanding the Wyoming park unit by one percent.²⁴⁴ The funding that

²⁴¹ “National Park Service Buys 86 Acres of Wyoming Lands Surrounded by Grand Teton National Park,” National Parks Traveler, December 30, 2012; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2012/12/national-park-service-buys-86-acres-wyoming-lands-surrounded-grand-teton-national-park22626> .

²⁴² Judy Killen, “Wyoming ag land increasing in value,” Powell Tribune, December 1, 2011;

<http://www.powelltribune.com/news/item/9040-wyoming-ag-land-increasing-in-value?tmpl=component&print=1>

²⁴³ “National Park Service Buys 86 Acres of Wyoming Lands Surrounded by Grand Teton National Park,” National Parks Traveler, December 30, 2012; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2012/12/national-park-service-buys-86-acres-wyoming-lands-surrounded-grand-teton-national-park22626> .

²⁴⁴ “National Park Service Buys 86 Acres of Wyoming Lands Surrounded by Grand Teton National Park,” National Parks Traveler, December 30, 2012; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2012/12/national-park-service-buys-86-acres-wyoming-lands-surrounded-grand-teton-national-park22626> .

will be used for the minimal expansion could have reduced the park's \$221.7 million deferred maintenance backlog by nearly 50 percent.²⁴⁵



NPS WILL SPEND \$107 MILLION TO EXPAND GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK BY ONE PERCENT. THE SAME AMOUNT COULD BE USED TO CUT THE PARK'S DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG IN HALF, SUCH AS THE COLLAPSING BARN PICTURED ABOVE.

The NPS plans to make additional purchases for well over \$100,000 per acre this year. For example, NPS plans to purchase three acres of property on the Virgin Islands for \$2.77 million, or \$923,000 per acre.²⁴⁶ NPS also plans to purchase two acres of Montana land to add to Glacier National Park for \$1.03 million.²⁴⁷



NPS WILL SPEND NEARLY \$1 MILLION PER ACRE TO ACQUIRE THREE ACRES OF PROPERTY IN THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS.

²⁴⁵ Email from the National Park Service to of the office of Senator Tom Coburn, April, 25, 2013.

²⁴⁶ "Land Acquisition Program: Land and Water Conservation Fund," Department of Interior website, accessed August 5, 2013; <http://www.doi.gov/budget/appropriations/2014/highlights/upload/FOO1.pdf> .

²⁴⁷ "Land Acquisition Program: Land and Water Conservation Fund," Department of Interior website, accessed August 5, 2013; <http://www.doi.gov/budget/appropriations/2014/highlights/upload/FOO1.pdf> .

In Michigan, the NPS has allotted \$5.2 million to purchase 37 acres for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore at \$142,000 per acre.²⁴⁸ The primary purpose of the purchase is to “minimize or eliminate the impact of constant threats, disturbances, past land use practices, increasing use and special interests, and pressures of outside growth and development.” The 37 acres acquired will help mitigate this threat, which includes the “recent practice of landowners in the area to raze [small homes] and replace them with larger trophy homes complete with swimming beach, patio, and boathouse.”²⁴⁹ The NPS will need an additional \$9.2 million to complete the land acquisition plan to stem the trophy home threat.

Grand Canyon National Park has reported longer waiting times and reduced visitor services due to a roughly \$1 million annualized budget reduction implemented as a result of sequestration.²⁵⁰ Yet, within weeks of implementing the budget cut at Grand Canyon National Park, the National Park Service paid \$2.5 million for a 34-acre seafood farm in Washington State to add to San Juan Island National Historical Park.²⁵¹



THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SPENT \$2.5 MILLION TO ACQUIRE AN OYSTER FARM THE SAME MONTH THE BUDGET FOR THE GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK WAS REDUCED BY \$1 MILLION, EXTENDING VISITOR WAITING TIMES TO AN HOUR.

Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in New Jersey and Pennsylvania posted a job opening for a realty specialist with a starting annual salary between \$77,500 and \$100,800.²⁵² The realty specialist will assist the National Park Service’s purchasing of \$66 million in additional land. The recreation area already holds a \$166 million deferred maintenance backlog and just months prior to the job posting, had to utilize

²⁴⁸ “Land Acquisition Program: Land and Water Conservation Fund,” Department of Interior website, accessed August 5, 2013; <http://www.doi.gov/budget/appropriations/2014/highlights/upload/FOO1.pdf> .

²⁴⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

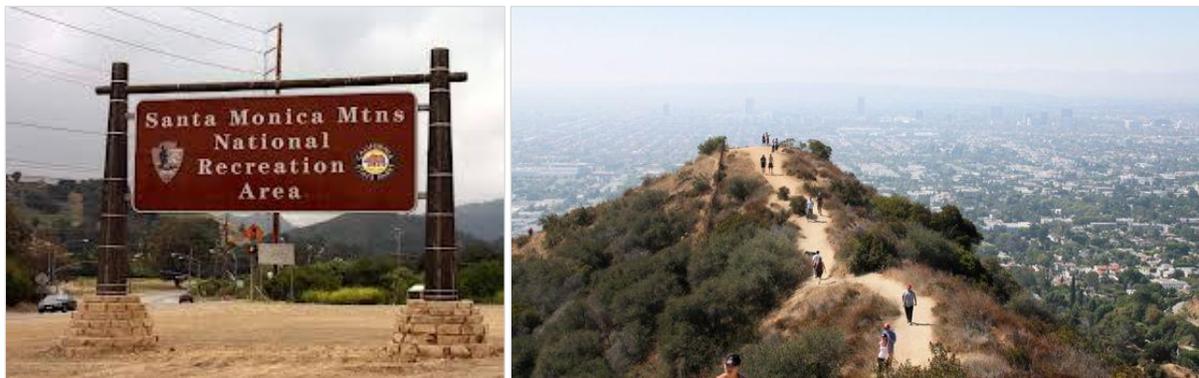
²⁵⁰ Brandon Loomis, “Cuts lead to longer lines at Grand Canyon, fewer rangers,” azcentral.com, June 16, 2013; <http://www.azcentral.com/travel/articles/20130616budget-cuts-grand-canyon.html> .

²⁵¹ Steve Wehrly, “Westcott Bay seafood farm added into fold of National Parks,” San Juan Journal, March 13, 2013; <http://www.sanjuanjournal.com/news/197250971.html> .

²⁵² Beth Brelje, “Park Service seeks agent to buy land for Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area,” Pocono Record, July 23, 2013; <http://www.poconorecord.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130723/NEWS/307230331/-1/NEWS> .

public donations to prevent the closure of several boat launches due to funding shortages.²⁵³

In California, \$163.7 million has been appropriated to acquire land for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area since its creation as part of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. Another \$56.2 million in future funding, including \$3.7 million in FY2014, is still needed to acquire an additional 19,042 acres. The stated need for the land acquisitions is the park unit is threatened by “residential and commercial developments.” These threats are likely due to the fact that Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area is located in the greater Los Angeles area, the 2nd most populated city in the United States. California also has the ignoble designation of having the largest deferred maintenance backlog of any state. With \$1.7 billion in accumulated maintenance needs, including \$495 million at Yosemite National Park, the \$56.2 million expended to combat commercial and residential development in the heavily populated Los Angeles metro area could be put to better use tending to the needs of other national park units within the state.



NPS HAS SPENT \$163 MILLION TO COMBAT URBAN DEVELOPMENT NEAR THE 2ND MOST POPULOUS CITY IN THE UNITED STATES

In addition to the exacerbation of problems created by adding more lands to the already overextended National Park System, the administrative costs of this program are large and inefficient. **In FY2012, the National Park Service spent \$9.48 million for federal land acquisition administration, equating to one dollar spent to administer every five dollars of land purchases.**²⁵⁴ NPS spends more money annually on administrative costs to acquire land than it does to operate the 47,000-acre Acadia National Park in Maine.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Beth Brelje, “Park Service seeks agent to buy land for Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area,” Pocono Record, July 23, 2013; <http://www.poconorecord.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130723/NEWS/307230331/-1/NEWS>.

²⁵⁴ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

²⁵⁵ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

Congress also continues to direct funds towards studying potential new park units. Congress can authorize a study to examine a proposed area to ensure it meets the criteria for significance, suitability, and feasibility for inclusion in the National Park System. During these special resource studies, the National Park Service will “solicit stakeholder and public engagement; explore partnerships with local communities, States, or Tribes; and determine potential for National designation by Congress.”²⁵⁶ In FY2013, NPS spent \$2.4 million paying 15 full-time employees to evaluate potential candidates for inclusion the National Park System, utilizing scarce budgetary resources to make future promises at the cost of realistic expectations.²⁵⁷

Regardless of the budgetary and management pressures, there are still strong political and parochial forces seeking to expand the National Park System. During the first seven months of the 113th Congress, 7 bills have already been introduced in the Senate to create new park units, 7 bills have been filed to study the potential for new parks, and 6 bills would expand the boundaries of existing parks. The USA Today reported that the National Park System “might be embarking on a growth spurt,” as many constituencies are seeking “the cachet of having a national park in your town.”²⁵⁸

With 401 National Park Units covering over 84 million acres and a deferred maintenance backlog of over \$11.5 billion in existing obligations, the piling on of new responsibilities to an already overextended system exhibits Congress’ inability to set responsible priorities for the National Park Service.

RECREATION FEES NEED TO BE MODERNIZED AND PRIORITIZED

The largest permanent appropriation in the National Park Service budget is the Recreation Fee program.²⁵⁹ Congress passed the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) in 2004, which authorized recreation fees to be collected and retained without separate appropriation by the National Park Service and other land management agencies. Recreation fee revenues, comprised of entrance fees, service-wide passes or other recreational related fees, can be used by NPS to “repair, maintain and enhance facilities; provide interpretation, information, or other park visitor services; restore habitat directly related to wildlife dependent recreation; and provide law enforcement related to public use and recreation both at the park where the fee is collected and throughout the national park system.”²⁶⁰ Under FLREA, the

²⁵⁶ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁵⁷ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁵⁸ Judy Keen, “National Park system nearing a growth spurt,” USA Today, October 13, 2012; <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2012/10/13/next-national-park-sites/1624889/>.

²⁵⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁶⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

collecting park unit retains up to 80 percent of its recreation fee revenue (100 percent if annual revenues are below \$500,000), with the rest going into a central discretionary account to be used for priority service-wide projects.²⁶¹

FLREA is a crucial program that allows for the revenue generated by the park units to support important Park Service projects that improve the experience of those that pay the entrance fees. However, there are opportunities to leverage FLREA policy to make greater progress towards reducing the \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog. These opportunities include increasing revenues through expanding parks eligible to collect fees and making modest pricing adjustments that retain affordability, especially on service-wide annual and senior lifetime passes. FLREA also has room for collection efficiency improvements and better prioritization of the fee obligations to ensure that as much fee revenue as possible are utilized for park improvements that enhance guest experience rather than administrative costs.

In FY2012, NPS collected a total of \$179.4 million in fee revenues through FLREA and obligated \$182.5 million from the FLREA account.²⁶² Of the \$182.5 million obligated, only \$75.1 million was made available for deferred maintenance projects, while another \$5.1 million was used for routine/annual facilities maintenance. Another \$48.3 million was used for capital improvements, habitat restoration, and interpretation & visitor services. While the \$48.3 million spent on these activities would be permissible in a normal budget environment, the current \$256 million shortfall in deferred maintenance funding means available funding should be prioritized for critical repairs and maintenance. For example, Steamtown National Historic Site utilized recreation fees to build a model of the train yard while its life-size train collection suffers from decades of neglect.

Until the deferred maintenance backlog is arrested, NPS and individual park units should utilize a larger portion of FLREA funds for deferred maintenance activities.

²⁶¹ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁶² In FY2012, NPS had \$103.4 million in unobligated balances brought forward, allowing FLREA to obligate funds in excess of revenues collected.



STEAMTOWN NHS UTILIZED PARK ENTRANCE FEES TO BUILD A MODEL TRAIN SET WHILE ITS STOCK OF TRAINS OUTSIDE REMAINS IN DISREPAIR.

In addition to prioritizing FLREA obligations, NPS should review the overhead costs of the program and seek efficiencies. A portion of the fee receipts are used for collection and administrative costs associated with the FLREA program. **In FY2012, NPS obligated \$52.9 million – or 30 percent of the total revenue – for collection, administrative, and fee management costs.**²⁶³ Collections costs, which include salaries, audits, and background checks for fee staff, consume a larger portion of fees collected at less-visited parks. The NPS notes that direct collection costs have been

Obligations by Project Type	FY2012 Funding
Facilities Routine/Annual Maintenance	\$5,144,000
Facilities Capital Improvement	\$9,211,000
Facilities Deferred Maintenance	\$75,103,000
Interpretation & Visitor Services	\$26,235,000
Habitat Restoration	\$12,860,000
Law Enforcement (for public use and recreation)	\$1,029,000
Collection Costs	\$35,442,000
Administrative, Overhead and Indirect Costs	\$11,625,000
Fee Management Agreement and Reservation Services	\$5,864,000
Total	\$182,513,000

reduced through increased efficiencies and monitoring expenses. However, other proposals indicate that further cost-savings can be discovered by installing automated collection technology or allowing concessionaires to manage collection operations.^{264 265} Even a modest improvement of reducing overhead costs from 30 percent to 25 percent of revenue collected would provide \$9 million more in receipts every year

THIRTY PERCENT OF REVENUES COLLECTED ARE LOST TO ADMINISTRATIVE AND COLLECTIONS COSTS. MODEST IMPROVEMENTS COULD SAVE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS EVERY YEAR FOR HIGHER PRIORITY PROJECTS.

²⁶³ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013;

http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁶⁴ “Sustainable Supplementary Funding for America’s National parks: Ideas for Parks Community Discussions,” Bipartisan Policy Center’s website, accessed August 20, 2013;

<http://bipartisanpolicy.org/sites/default/files/NPHA%20Version%20of%20Park%20Funding%20Ideas.pdf>.

²⁶⁵ STATEMENT OF GERARD GABRYS, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, GUEST SERVICES INC., FOR THE NATIONAL PARK HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION BEFORE THE U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES OVERSIGHT HEARING ON SUSTAINABLE SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING FOR AMERICA’S NATIONAL PARKS http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=9c045503-cb40-462d-839c-26738508c3ec.

for deferred maintenance projects.

Beyond improving the efficiency of collecting revenues, opportunities exist to expand the amount of fees collected while maintaining affordability. In 2012, NPS accommodated roughly 286 million visitors, and only collected an average of **63 cents per visitor**.²⁶⁶ Currently, only 134 of the 401 park units charge an entrance fee. Several park units are prohibited from charging entrance fees by law, including the most visited National Park in the United States (Great Smoky Mountains NP) and any park unit located in Washington DC.²⁶⁷ While there are logistical constraints for collecting entrance fees at some sites, such as urban open-air memorials, Congress should eliminate fee collection prohibitions and NPS should scrutinize all park sites for feasible recreational fee options. For example, the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform identified that an average fee increase of \$.25 per visitor would raise \$75 million annually.²⁶⁸ At least 155 park units could replace their annual operating allowance at a cost of less than \$10 per visitor. This small change could make a large difference. The National Park Service also honors and sells the “America the Beautiful” pass, which provides admission to every NPS unit and other federal lands. The current rate for an annual interagency pass is \$80, the same as the annual pass for Vermont state parks and below the \$125-\$195 annual pass for California state parks.²⁶⁹ In FY2012, the Park Service sold approximately 262,678 passes, generating about \$21 million in receipts. Park advocates have suggested increasing the America the Beautiful to \$100, which would raise an additional \$5.3 million annually for park

Fee collection at Great Smoky Mountains NP could Make Huge Strides at Reducing Backlog

If just \$2 per visitor were collected on the 9.6 million annual visitors to Great Smoky National Park, the entire annual operating budget would be covered. An average of just \$5 per visitor would provide an additional \$33.7 million annually (after 30 percent administrative and collections costs) for deferred maintenance projects. This meager fee could eliminate the parks massive \$290 million deferred maintenance backlog within 10 years.



²⁶⁶ \$179.4 million in collected fees/286.7 million visitors. Source: “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁶⁷ “Sustainable Supplementary Funding for America’s National parks: Ideas for Parks Community Discussions,” Bipartisan Policy Center’s website, accessed August 20, 2013; <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/sites/default/files/NPHA%20Version%20of%20Park%20Funding%20Ideas.pdf>.

²⁶⁸ “\$200 Billion in Illustrative Savings,” Fiscal Commission website, accessed August 20, 2013; http://www.fiscalcommission.gov/sites/fiscalcommission.gov/files/documents/Illustrative_List_11.10.2010.pdf.

²⁶⁹ “Fees,” Vermont State Parks website, accessed August 20, 2013; <http://www.vtstateparks.com/htm/fees.htm> and “Pass descriptions,” California State Parks website, accessed August 20, 2013; http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1049.

projects while retaining affordability and competitive pricing with other state park systems.

Appearing to be from the same era as 5-cent Coca-Colas, the National Park Service sells a lifetime interagency parks pass to anybody over the age of 62 for only \$10. The NPS sold 500,446 senior lifetime passes in FY2012, generating \$5 million in receipts. While it may be appropriate policy for seniors to qualify for a discount on park entrance passes, the current lifetime fee structure is far too generous and should be reformed. If the cost of the senior lifetime pass matched the annual “America the Beautiful” pass, an additional \$35 million would have been generated in FY2012.

Finally, NPS holds fee free days as “a good will gesture to the public during the economic downturn.”²⁷⁰ In 2013, NPS will have 11 fee free days throughout the year, each costing about \$750,000 to \$1 million in lost revenue.²⁷¹ Yet, Park Service data found that waiving entrance fees “yielded no noticeable uptick in visitors.”²⁷² At a cost of up to \$11 million this year, the efficacy of this expensive gesture must be weighed against the mounting needs of the deferred maintenance backlog.

THE ADMINISTRATION’S RESPONSE: A CALL FOR MORE PROBLEMS THAN SOLUTIONS

Congress alone is not wholly responsible for the neglect and misplaced priorities that are trashing our national treasures. Recent administrations of both political parties have failed to heed their own warnings about the maintenance backlog and conditions of our most cherished parks. The current administration does not attempt to conceal the funding shortage for maintenance activities that is leading to the continued growth of the \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog. The administration publically reported in its annual budget that “the current funding to address [deferred maintenance], received through multiple sources, is not sufficient to deter continued growth of the backlog and address the NPS’ accessibility and sustainability needs.”²⁷³

According to the current Director of the National Park Service, “annual appropriations remain far and away the heart of our operation and are the primary solution for addressing our maintenance backlog.”²⁷⁴ Yet, the FY2014 budget proposal, representing

²⁷⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁷¹ Ed O’Keefe, “Fee-free dates to visit national parks announced,” Washington Post, January 6, 2011; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/05/AR2011010506231.html>.

²⁷² Ed O’Keefe, “Fee-free dates to visit national parks announced,” Washington Post, January 6, 2011; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/05/AR2011010506231.html>.

²⁷³ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁷⁴ Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for an oversight hearing to consider supplemental funding options to support the National Park Service’s Efforts to address deferred maintenance and operational needs, July 25, 2013; http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6d4ed073-b1f5-42cf-a61a-122be71e67b9.

the National Park Service's request to Congress for appropriations, did not include a plan to close the \$256 million deferred maintenance funding gap. Nor did it exhibit any urgency to take corrective actions. The NPS FY2014 budget proposal delineated six priority goals for the following fiscal year, including addressing climate change, getting youth outdoors, and cutting waste.²⁷⁵ Curbing the rapidly growing backlog did not make the list.

In fact, in many ways the NPS's own budget proposal serves to aggravate the growing deferred maintenance backlog. For example, the Park Service requested a \$3.2 million reduction to the system-wide park base operations facility maintenance account. In its narrative explanation of the budget cut, NPS admitted "postponement of facility maintenance can create additional deferred maintenance as well as increase the physical and fiscal impacts on facility systems already over-due for maintenance."²⁷⁶ While the Administration asserts that the solution to addressing the maintenance backlog rests with proper appropriations, the outcome of their appropriation requests is to make the problems even worse.

The cyclic maintenance program that provides funding for projects such as road sealing, painting and roofing buildings, and upgrades to electrical and security systems, is described by the Park Service as "a key component in NPS efforts to curtail the continued growth of deferred maintenance needs."²⁷⁷ The Administration did not request any additional funding for the "key component" to stemming the growth of the deferred maintenance backlog.

As a result of the cyclic maintenance "not being performed in a timely manner," the Repair and Rehabilitation Program is necessary to address the \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog. The Repair and Rehabilitation program is an "overall service-wide deferred maintenance strategy that directs funds to high priority mission critical and mission dependent assets."²⁷⁸ The Administration only requested a two percent increase for the program that repairs "high priority mission critical" assets.

At \$78 million in FY2012, the line-item construction budget that is used primarily for the largest and most critical life, health, and safety maintenance projects was funded at its lowest level since 1988. While the FY2014 Park Service requested a modest \$5.3 million annual increase, 36 percent of the \$83 million request was allotted for a new \$30 million capital investment project in Everglades National Park.²⁷⁹ In the prior year,

²⁷⁵ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁷⁶ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁷⁷ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁷⁸ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

²⁷⁹ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

the Park Service's request for line-item construction was \$52.4 million, a 32 percent decrease from the already historically low level in FY2012.²⁸⁰

Beyond the annual budget proposal, NPS has issued a set of overarching goals to forward the NPS mission as it prepares for the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016. NPS has launched a "Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement," which consists of 39 "specific goals and measurable actions that chart a new direction for the National Park Service as it enters its second century."²⁸¹

The first item on the "Call to Action" agenda is "Fill in the Blanks," which calls for expanding the National Park System even more to achieve an undefined "comprehensive" system.²⁸² The 24th item on the 39-point agenda is "Invest Wisely." The goal of this initiative is to focus available maintenance resources on high priority projects in order to "correct the health and safety, accessibility, environmental, and deferred maintenance deficiencies **in at least 25 percent** of the facilities that are most important to park visitor experience and resource protection [*emphasis added*]."²⁸³ The NPS's soaring proclamation to prepare for its 2nd century of management is to add even more commitments to the park system while striving to properly maintain a quarter of them. Ensuring prosperity prior to adding additional property would be a more appropriate strategy as we approach the 100th year anniversary of NPS.

The \$256 million annual shortfall in maintenance funding that adds to the swelling \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog is not caused by budget constraints, but a lack of leadership. Yes, Congress ultimately holds the purse strings and has been responsible for piling on new responsibilities to the park service, but the administration has been complicit in the continued decay of our Park System. Without a clear vision on how the federal government is going to keep the vast commitments it has made to the American people, the entire park system will continue to be subjugated to more neglect and decay.

²⁸⁰ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2013," National Park Service, 2012; http://home.nps.gov/applications/budget2/FY13_NPS_Greenbook.pdf.

²⁸¹ "A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement," National Park Service website, accessed August 22, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/calltoaction/PDF/C2A_2013_screen.pdf.

²⁸² "A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement," National Park Service website, accessed August 22, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/calltoaction/PDF/C2A_poster_2013.pdf.

²⁸³ "A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement," National Park Service website, accessed August 22, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/calltoaction/PDF/C2A_poster_2013.pdf.

CHAPTER III: CONGRESS' MISPLACED PRIORITIES MISMANAGE THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND THREATEN OUR NATIONAL TREASURES

Members of Congress have turned the National Park Service into their own National Pork Service. The designation of national parks, intended to celebrate our land and heritage, has been perverted too often to earmark parochial projects with little or no national significance. The result is park resources are not being properly managed and the park system is losing its quality.

“We are not taking care of the Grand Canyons, the Yellowstones, the Everglades and historic sites such as Independence Hall while we spend hundreds of millions of dollars on what can best be described as local or regional economic development sites,” contends former Director of the National Park Service James Ridenour. Members of Congress “have turned ‘pork barrel’ into ‘park barrel.’”²⁸⁴

The recently created national historic park in Paterson, New Jersey is a classic example of Congress abusing the National Park Service for purely parochial purposes.

With a 77-foot high majestic waterfall and its origin associated with Alexander Hamilton and the beginnings of the American industrial revolution, Paterson lays claim to both natural and historical landmarks but hardly of the stature of sites such as the Statue of Liberty or Independence Hall. But mired in urban decay following the city’s industrial decline, local politicians saw the establishment of a national park in the area as a means of economic renewal.

Beginning in the early 1990s, legislation was introduced in the House and Senate year after year to advance Paterson as a “Great Falls Historic District” within the National Park Service.

In March 2001, a Department of Interior official testified before Congress recommending no action be taken on the Great Falls Historic District legislation noting Congress had already authorized financial support for the proposed historic district in 1996 but neither Congress nor the community followed through with the funds.

“Without this demonstrated local financial support for the operation and protection of new park units, it is probably not feasible to recommend their addition to the System.”²⁸⁵ The department official requested a moratorium on new congressional park

²⁸⁴ James M. Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books Inc., pages 16 and 17, 1994.

²⁸⁵ Statement of Joseph E. Doddridge, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of Interior, before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands, House Committee on Resources, concerning H.R. 146, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the Great Falls Historic District in Paterson, New Jersey, as a unit of the National Park System, March 13, 2001; <http://www.nps.gov/legal/testimony/107th/grtflsnj.htm>.

mandates so that the department “can focus our existing staff and resources on taking care of what we now own,” referring to the substantial backlog in park maintenance.²⁸⁶

Undeterred by the department’s concerns regarding the impact of adding new parks on the care of existing parks, Congress passed legislation in November 2001 directing the Department of Interior to conduct a Special Resource Study to determine “the suitability and feasibility of further recognizing the historic and cultural significance of the lands and structures” in Paterson “through the designation of the Great Falls Historic District as a unit of the National Park System.”²⁸⁷ The study concluded the resources in the Paterson area “fail to meet the criteria for suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management.”²⁸⁸

Once again, Congress ignored the findings of the study it commissioned and legislation was introduced in 2007 establishing the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park as a unit of the National Park System (H.R. 189/S. 148). While the House passed the bill 256 – 122, the legislation was stopped in the Senate by a senator who shared the concerns of the National Park Service and attempted to filibuster the bill. The Senator argued that instead of creating new parks, Congress “should begin by better managing the land we already oversee. We have a \$9 billion maintenance back log within the national park service because Congress prefers to create new pet projects rather than responsibly oversee the parks we’ve already created.”²⁸⁹ But the proponents would finally overcome the Senate filibuster and win the park designation as part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, a mega bill that was stuffed with over 160 individual public lands bills.

Amidst the celebration of finally winning approval for the new park after decades lurked the sober reality of the park service’s warnings of caution — parks cost money and there was already significant unmet costs to maintaining the current park system.

The congressman who sponsored the bill “disclosed” he was told after the “bill signing that he should expect to wait ‘about 12 years’ before the park is ready to open,” which would be 2021.²⁹⁰ “The reason for the delays — and the continued mistreatment to one of America’s natural wonders — has much to do with the misguided nature of political public relations hoopla as much as the slow walk of bureaucracy. Indeed, when Obama

286 Statement of Joseph E. Doddridge, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of Interior, before the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands, House Committee on Resources, concerning H.R. 146, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of designating the Great Falls Historic District in Paterson, New Jersey, as a unit of the National Park System, March 13, 2001;

<http://www.nps.gov/legal/testimony/107th/grtflsnj.htm> .

287 Public Law 107-59 (H.R. 146, Great Falls Historic District Study Act of 2001).

288 “Special Resource Study: Great Falls Historic District; Paterson, New Jersey,” United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Northeast Region, November 2006, page 69;

http://www.nps.gov/nero/greatfalls/GreatFallsSRS_November2006.pdf .

289 Statement of Senator Tom Coburn, “Dr. Coburn Calls Omnibus Lands Package a Return to Business As Usual,” January 6, 2009; http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ContentRecord_id=adcc37f6-802a-23ad-4950-1d97fa30c9fb .

290 Mike Kelly, “Trash piling up at Great Falls; Site was approved in ’09 for historic park,” The Record, March 28, 2011; http://www.northjersey.com/columnists/Trash_piling_up_at_site_approved_in_09_for_historic_park.html .

signed the Omnibus Public Lands Act at the White House, there was little talk amid the fanfare that the project faced numerous obstacles — including the not-so-small problem of a lack of money,” reported the local New Jersey press.²⁹¹

And it is not just the politicians in Congress who whimsically create new parks without taking into account the fiscal reality and consequences.

As sequestration—the automatic budget mechanism designed to cut spending created by Congress and the President as part of the Budget Control Act of 2011—was set to go into effect March 1, the National Park Service warned the opening of the Grand Canyon would be delayed and its hours of operation would be reduced, student education programs at Gettysburg would be eliminated, campgrounds in the Great Smoky Mountains would be closed, and operations, maintenance, and safety in every national park, from the National Mall to Yellowstone would be affected and park visitors would suffer.²⁹² These dire warnings seemed to be overlooked days later as the President established three new National Park units, each of which would have to compete for funding with the hundreds of other parks already struggling with shrinking budgets.²⁹³ One of the new parks just happens to be in Delaware, the home state of the vice president and “will fulfill a longtime wish,” instigating some to ridicule the new national park as a “national perk.”²⁹⁴

And that is exactly how too many in Washington view the designation of national parks, as a perk for pork used to buy votes, reward the influential, secure federal largess, satisfy personal whims and even threaten retribution without much thought for the consequences to our true national treasures.

BUYING VOTES. The establishment of a national historic site to commemorate Thomas Stone, a little-known signer of the Declaration of Independence who had argued for reconciling with the British, contradicted the official opinion of the Park Service Advisory Board, which recommended against including the site. The chief historical architect for the Park Service said the Thomas Stone Historic Site represents just one example of “many things Congress has authorized which we feel are of marginal value and don’t meet the standards for inclusions in the National Park Service.”²⁹⁵ However, the creation of the park did have value for several members of Congress—one who wanted a park in his district and the other who needed the support of that

²⁹¹ Mike Kelly, “Trash piling up at Great Falls; Site was approved in ’09 for historic park,” *The Record*, March 28, 2011; http://www.northjersey.com/columnists/Trash_piling_up_at_site_approved_in_09_for_historic_park.html.

²⁹² Lisa Rein, “Federal Eye: New details emerge of potential sequester cuts to national parks,” *The Washington Post*, February 21, 2013; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/federal-eye/wp/2013/02/21/new-details-emerge-of-cuts-to-national-parks-during-sequester/>.

²⁹³ “President Obama Designates Five New National Monuments,” *The White House Office of the Press Secretary*, March 25, 2013; <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/03/25/president-obama-designates-five-new-national-monuments>.

²⁹⁴ Geoff Earle, “Biden’s national perk,” *New York Post*, March 26, 2013; http://www.nypost.com/p/news/national/biden_national_perk_RJAePcyn8u5COPartB3QjJ.

²⁹⁵ Marting Crutsinger, “Lack of funds leaves landmarks crumbling,” *Beaver County Times*, July 12, 1981, page D-2; <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2002&dat=19810712&id=MmYuAAAAIbAJ&sjid=yNkFAAAAIbAJ&pg=1482.2340500>.

congressman to get his omnibus parks bill passed. Decades later, the park attracts few visitors but cost taxpayers more than half-a-million dollars annually to operate.

REWARDING THE WELL CONNECTED. The Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial in Philadelphia, another obscure site established by Congress that honors a little known Polish supporter of the American Revolution, is the result of the influence of a Polish-American businessman who successfully lobbied Congress to overrule the National Park Service's objections. The site receives few visitors and stands more as a memorial to how the well-heeled are often more persuasive with Congress' decision making than facts, figures, experts, and rational thought.

One cannot get much more influential than the spouse of a member of Congress who chairs a powerful subcommittee. That is how the founder and president of the National First Ladies' Library managed to have her pet project turned into a national park unit without any hearings or studies. In fact, the park was created without being contained in any legislation prior to its inclusion in a conference report after both the House and Senate had already voted. The Ohio congressman said "that his wife didn't ask him for 'much of anything'" and she said she "never expected any federal money." Regardless he managed to earmark millions of dollars for the First Ladies project," including \$800,000 to buy a mansion that once belonged to President McKinley and his wife."²⁹⁶ Now the congressman is retired, but as a unit of the National Park Service, his wife's national park continues to receive nearly \$1 million a year in federal support but very few visitors.²⁹⁷

USING PARKS TO SATISFY PAROCHIAL INTERESTS. Politicians have utilized the park designations to both spur and deter economic development for local parochial interests.

The Keweenaw National Historical Park on Michigan's Upper Peninsula was pushed by a powerful Senator to revitalize an area left in decay after the collapse of the copper boom by attracting tourists and federal dollars. While it is difficult to determine whether making it a unit of the National Park Service achieved the goal of economic revitalization by drawing tourists, since the number of visitors are not counted, what is certain is the area has moved from mining copper to mining federal largess, extracting \$1.5 million from the National Park Service budget every year to support its operating costs.

In Washington state, Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve was created for the exact opposite reason—to deter development and to keep outsiders from building homes on Whidbey Island. The local congressman believed it would be "criminal" if the area

²⁹⁶ Matt Stearns, "Congressman's gift to wife true treasure, and critics take note," The Seattle Times/Knight Ridder Newspapers, June 18, 2006; http://seattletimes.com/html/politics/2003068949_regula18.html.

²⁹⁷ National Park Service statistics for 2012.

was “allowed to slip into cluttered private development” and the state’s senator, who was the chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resource Committee, agreed. According to the NPS, no one “remembers exactly” where the reserve idea came from or how the concept would work, but the proposal was attached to the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. “Its fate ultimately rested less on its own merits than on powerful congressional support.”²⁹⁸

EARMARKING PET PROJECTS. Despite the National Park Service describing the site as having “no importance” and “no historical significance,”²⁹⁹ a Kansas congressman turned what was “essentially a slum” into the Fort Scott National Historic Site.

But perhaps no park better demonstrates how the threats of one powerful politician can override wisdom and commonsense than Steamtown USA. Founded by a steam train enthusiast and embraced by a powerful Pennsylvania Republican congressman, the railroad museum was designated as a national historic site over the objection of the Reagan Administration and the National Park Service. A NPS official referred to Steamtown USA as a “white elephant” that “didn’t fit our basic missions, to preserve historic sites, actual places that are significant in American history.” A former Smithsonian transportation curator called it “a third-rate collection in a place to which it has no relevance.” Other critics were less polite, labeling it a “disgrace,” a “boondoggle joke,” and “a virtual pork poster child.” Yet when funding the project came up for a vote, it was soundly defeated when the sponsor of the project threatened retribution, listing off \$17.9 million worth of other member’s projects for which he threatened to eliminate funding.³⁰⁰ This was not the first time a powerful member would bully others to get his way. The chairman of the House Parks Subcommittee in the late 1970s who presided over the largest expansion in the number of parks created once threatened to turn another member’s entire district into a national park to demonstrate his political power.³⁰¹

These misuses of park designations expose the broken system within Congress where parks are often created for the wrong reasons and without proper study or merit while existing parks are ignored as they fall into a state of squalor.

There are even blurred lines between the committees that are supposed to create the parks and those that are expected to fund the parks, demonstrating a lack of coordination. The authorizing committees are supposed to authorize new parks but they do so without little or any consideration for the cost or impact of the bills they pass,

²⁹⁸ “An Unbroken Historical Record: Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve: Administrative History,” National Park Service website, May 27, 2000; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ebla/adhi/chap4.htm.

²⁹⁹ Jim Fisher, “Fort built on a dime here, nickel there: A patient approach to government funding led to site’s success,” *Kansas City Star*, September 21, 1997.

³⁰⁰ Pete Leffler, “Steamtown Survives Funding Assault in House,” *Morning Call*, July 16, 1993.

³⁰¹ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 373.

rationalizing there is no financial impact from creating new parks on the budget of the National Park Service. The appropriations committees are supposed to appropriate the funds for park operations, yet appropriations bills are used to create new parks that were not authorized, such as the First Ladies National Historic Site and Steamtown National Historic Site.

Put simply, Congress focuses on the next press release rather than looking at the big picture. Creating a park gets front-page local news. Keeping a park clean and in good shape does not. “The ball to add new sites to the NPS really got rolling in a big way during the 1970s,” according to former director Ridenour. “The House subcommittee dealing with parks authorization was called the Park-of-the-Month Club.”³⁰²

A 2008 Senate debate exposed the disconnect between creating and paying for new parks in the minds of some members of Congress. A bill, S. 2739, the Consolidated Natural Resources Act, was brought to the floor stuffed with 62 individual measures that the Congressional Budget Office estimated collectively would cost \$320 million over five years to enact.³⁰³ The opponents of the bill questioned the merits of some of the projects, such as \$4 million to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the voyages of Samuel de Champlain, Henry Hudson, and Robert Fulton, and argued the National Park Service, which had a \$9 billion maintenance backlog at the time, could not afford these new commitments. The Republican ranking member of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources dismissed these concerns, claiming the bill had no costs whatsoever before conceding that it could cost something: “Let's be clear here: these are authorization bills, they compel no appropriations in most cases, and spending to carry out the intent of the vast majority of these bills is contained in the salaries and expenses of the Departments within whose jurisdiction these matters lie. So, the premise of the Senator from Oklahoma--that these bills will inflate spending and increase the deficit--is fundamentally flawed. As I have noted, most of these measures have no direct cost to the Treasury; rather, they set priorities for the Departments for the use of their administrative budgets that will be appropriated each year. But one of the principal objections the Senator from Oklahoma has raised to all the bills the committee has is they cost too much money or, as he puts it: They will someday cost money. That may be true.”³⁰⁴

It is true and someday is today.

“At the end of Fiscal Year 2012, the National Park Service faced an \$11.5 billion backlog of deferred maintenance. This amount grows annually at a far greater rate than the Service is able to pay down,” the current director of the National Park Service Jonathan

³⁰² James M. Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books Inc., pages 17, 1994.

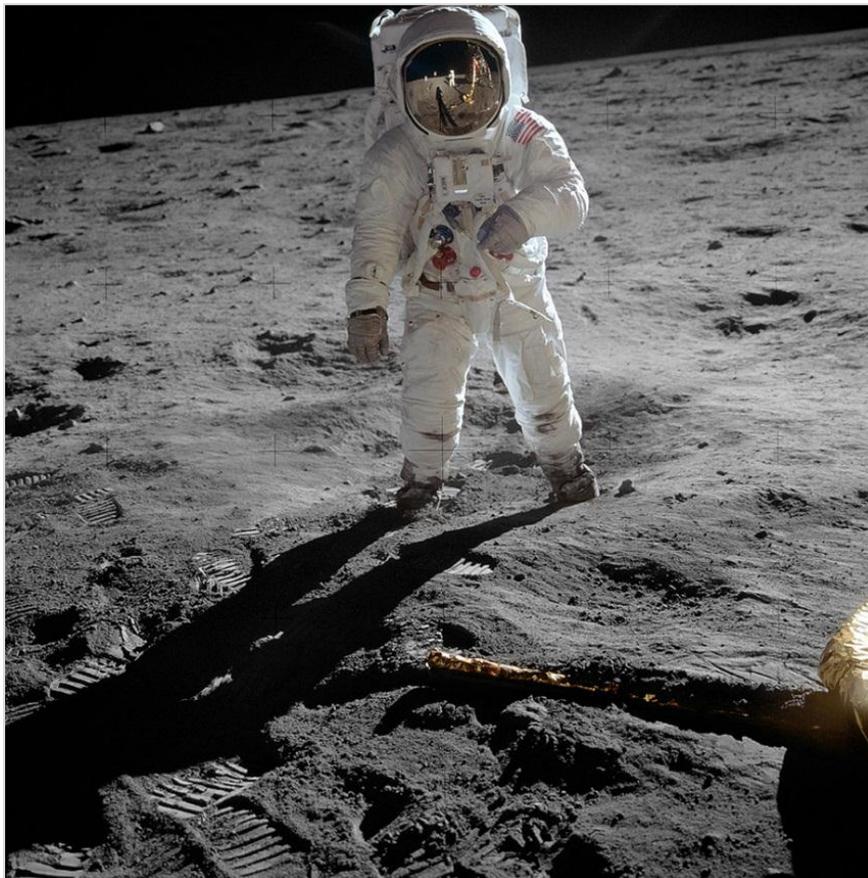
³⁰³ Correspondence from Peter R. Orszag, DIRECTOR OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE, TO U.S. SENATOR TOM A. COBURN, January 31, 2008.

³⁰⁴ Congressional Record, April 10, 2008, page S2865.

Jarvis testified before the Senate in July. “In order to merely hold the backlog at a steady level of \$11.5 billion, the NPS would have to spend nearly \$700 million per year on deferred maintenance projects. To place this figure in perspective, the annual operating budget of the entire National Park Service in Fiscal Year 2012 was \$2.2 billion. The National Park Service has endured successive years of reduced appropriations.”³⁰⁵

How has Congress reacted to NPS’ plight of growing needs with a shrinking budget?

More than 35 bills have been introduced this year to date to study, create or expand national parks, monuments and heritage areas, including a bill to establish a national historic park on the moon.³⁰⁶



OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD PRIORITIES? AS THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE JUGGLES AN \$11.5 BILLION DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG SOME IN CONGRESS ARE PROPOSING CREATING NEW PARKS – INCLUDING ONE ON THE MOON.

³⁰⁵ Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for an oversight hearing to consider supplemental funding options to support the National Park Service’s Efforts to address deferred maintenance and operational needs, July 25, 2013; http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6d4ed073-b1f5-42cf-a61a-122be71e67b9 .

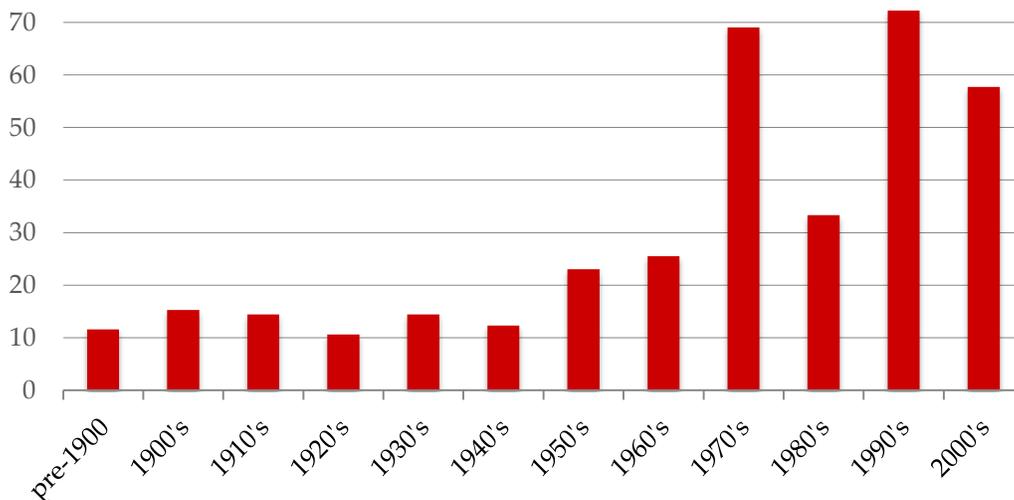
³⁰⁶ Thomas, Library of Congress legislative information website, <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php>.

PARKS AS PORK AND POLITICAL POWER

The practice of creating new park units by way of inside-the-beltway politicking, rather than in getting a new park approved through merit, has resulted in a growing number of marginally significant and sporadically visited national park units. Political power and special interests has often trumped the guidance of the first NPS director that “the national park system...should not be lowered in standard, dignity, and prestige by the inclusion of areas which express in less than the highest terms the particular class or kind of exhibit which they represent.”³⁰⁷ The dilution of resources caused by parochial parks is a direct contributor to the \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog.

The diminishment of the standard, dignity, and prestige of our National Park System over time is readily apparent when looking at the visitation and subsidies by decades of establishment. Of the top 25 *most* visited national park units in 2012, only **8** have been approved since 1970. In comparison, of the 25 *least* visited parks, **20** have been established since 1970.³⁰⁸ The emphasis on parochialism over priorities continues to this day, where the National Park System continues to be transformed from a cohesive mosaic symbolic of America’s greatest cultural achievements and natural landmarks into a parochial patchwork of legislative triumphs.

Average Cost Per Visitor to Parks by Decade
Established (\$)



THE AVERAGE COST PER VISITOR TO PARKS CREATED SINCE 1970 IS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER IN PART BECAUSE THESE PARKS ATTRACT FEWER VISITORS.

³⁰⁷ “THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: A Brief History,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/hisnps/npshistory/npshisto.htm>.

³⁰⁸ Top 25 least visited parks list does not include Washington Monument, which was closed for construction in 2012. “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

Leader of the “park of the months” club, perhaps no member of Congress has had a greater impact on the current ensemble of our National Park System than Representative Phil Burton of California.³⁰⁹ Described by the Sierra Club president Dr. Edgar Wayburn as “a big engine...for the rest of us to lay track,” Rep. Burton tapped into the political power that flowed from his position as chairman of the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Insular affairs, eventually adding more national park and wilderness land than all of the presidents and congresses before him combined.³¹⁰ When all was said and done, during his four year tenure Rep. Burton oversaw the creation of 30 new national park units, 8 new national trails, and 8 wild and scenic river designations. In total, one lawmaker placed nearly 10 percent of the entire landmass of the United States under the ownership and control of the federal government.³¹¹

After losing a Democratic caucus election for House Majority leader by one vote, Rep. Burton was appointed chairman of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Insular affairs. Upon receiving this designation, he immediately turned his attention to National Parks as an avenue to try to reassemble his power base for another shot at leadership. Rep. Burton’s biographer described this transition, “...already the political wheels were turning. Parks were good. People liked them. He could deliver more. Members would owe him. That would give him power.”³¹²

Rep. Burton’s tenure was a time when inside-the-beltway gamesmanship trumped the notion of sound policy making. Burton used his position to “dominate the field, dazzle his colleagues, reward friends, and punish enemies.”³¹³ One of his aides provided insight into how he leveraged his position to affect other member’s districts. “He looked at parks not as adding acres here or there but as a political statement. Some people want environmental impact reports. He’d say ‘Get me a member impact report. How many members are hurt and how many are helped by this?’”³¹⁴ To prove his superiority over other members, he once threatened Representative Jim Oberstar of Minnesota that he was going to turn his entire district into a national park.³¹⁵

Another driving force behind Burton was not his passion for parks, rather his passion to prove his legislative superiority. His biographer described his process as “the ultimate

³⁰⁹ James Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books, 1994. Page 80

³¹⁰ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995. Page 351.

³¹¹ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995. Page 351-352.

³¹² John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995. Page 333.

³¹³ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 333.

³¹⁴ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 353.

³¹⁵ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 373.

act of domination...he could show he was smarter than everyone else.”³¹⁶ No better anecdote embodies Burton’s mindset than when Rep. Burton asked his aide “Isn’t the GGNRA [Golden Gate National Recreational Area] beautiful?” His aide responded, “Yeah, Phil...it’s a nice place.” Burton retorted, “Not the place...the bill.”³¹⁷

NATIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION ACT OF 1978

The largest bill during Rep. Burton’s chairmanship was the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, authorizing \$1.2 billion for more than 100 parks, rivers, historic sites and trails.³¹⁸ While some may consider this Act a great victory for conservation, a closer examination shows this legislation was one of the first major political earmark bills whose impact continues to resonate in today’s National Park System. The National Parks omnibus package was the brainchild of Rep. Burton, who came up with the strategy when he needed a path forward to move legislation that affected his home district in San Francisco. Figuring out how to cobble together enough votes to pass his bills, he inquired with his staff, “Why not get something for everyone? Christ, we’ll pork out.”³¹⁹ So it began, Burton piled provisions into the package so that everyone had a pet project, thus nobody could vote against it.

Rep. Burton’s promises were sweeping, including park expansions, dams, and new park units for his colleagues, including the Santa Monica National Recreation Area where his fellow California Congressmen, Robert Lagomarsino, had memories of dancing on the roof of the El Mirador Hotel with his wife. These promises were used to assure that members, who would otherwise oppose his bill, would vote with him. As one lawmaker put it, “Phil had 150 members by the ears...all he had to do was smile and remind them their park was going into the omnibus bill. The message was clear: on the Burton team, you give something to get something.”³²⁰

Burton’s shrewd crafting of the bill went beyond exchanging parks for votes, as he avoided transparency of items in the bill that would make some legislators nervous. After seeing the first draft of his bill, which included the customary headings and titles to identify sections of the legislation, Burton screamed at the legislative counsel responsible for drafting the bill to cut out the titles asking, “You want them to find everything? You’re making it too easy!”³²¹ Burton’s obfuscations did not end at

³¹⁶ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 354.

³¹⁷ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 352.

³¹⁸ Seth S King, “President Signs a Bill for Record Spending of \$1.2 Billion on 100 Parks, Rivers, Historic Sites, and Trails,” November 12, 1978.

³¹⁹ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 356.

³²⁰ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 364.

³²¹ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 365.

removing identifying titles, as he included a section that amended the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area by striking out boundary map 90,000-A dated September 1976 and replacing it with Boundary map 644-90,003 dated May 1978. Unbeknownst to even most Congressional staff, this seemingly innocuous modification actually added \$29 million to buy land in the Cuyahoga National Recreation Area.³²²

Dubbed by several newspapers, including the Washington Post, as the “Park-Barrel Bill,” the 157-page bill passed out of the House Interior Committee in under an hour and a half.³²³ The House Rules Committee considered it an even less time, reporting it out in less than five minutes. Rep. Trent Lott, who received a provision for the Gulf Islands National Seashore, observed, “Notice how quiet we are. We all got something in there.”³²⁴ Another congressman described the scope of the bill’s provisions as, “if it had a blade of grass and a squirrel, it got in the bill.”³²⁵

The greasing of the wheels did not end when the bill was passed out of the necessary committees. In order to clear seventy technical amendments when the bill moved to the full House by unanimous consent, Burton had to get them pre-approved by Kansas Representative Joe Skubitz. This cooperation was assured by adding Section 611, which renamed Big Hill Lake in Kansas, the Pearson-Skubitz Big Hill Lake.³²⁶ From there, the entire House debated the names of the national parks, but no concerted debate occurred about the expansion of public lands or costs of the massive bill. Under Burton’s cunning guidance the House approved the unprecedented bill by a margin of 341-60.

³²² John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 367.

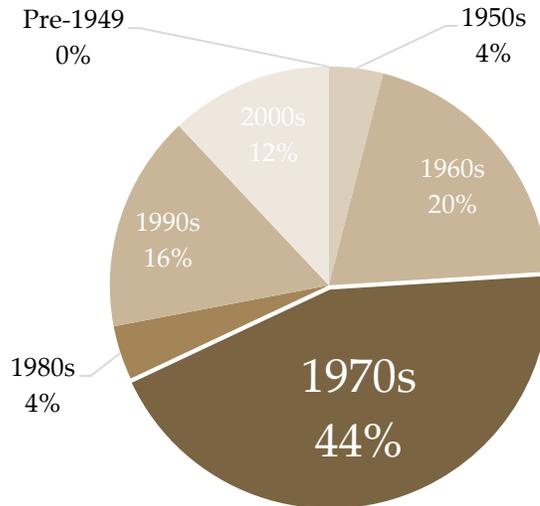
³²³ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 367.

³²⁴ Mary Russell, “‘Park-Barrel Bill’ Clears House Panel” The Washington Post, June 22, 1978.

³²⁵ Mary Russell, “‘Park-Barrel Bill’ Clears House Panel” The Washington Post, June 22, 1978.

³²⁶ John Jacobs, “A Rage for Justice: The Passion and Politics of Phillip Burton,” University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1995, Page 370.

25 Least Visited Parks by Decade Established



MUCH LIKE BELLBOTTOMS AND DISCO, MANY NATIONAL PARKS CREATED IN THE 1970S ARE NOT VERY POPULAR TODAY. NEARLY HALF OF THE 25 LEAST VISITED PARKS WERE ESTABLISHED IN THE '70S.

A STEEP PRICE TO PAY

The individual members of the 95th Congress received their pet projects, Phil Burton received his sought after package, and the American people are still stuck footing the bill. The immediate price of the omnibus was \$1.2 billion, and the residual effects of this legislative boondoggle continues at nearly \$37 million in annual operating costs for the 15 park units and 3 NPS managed areas that were established by the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. This funding is allocated to some of the least visited, and most costly per visitor units, including six of the thirty-two least visited parks in the entire system.³²⁷

³²⁷ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

2012 Visitation, Budget, and Subsidy per Visitor of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978

Park Title	2012 Visitation	FY2012 Budget	Subsidy per visitor
Ebey's Landing NHR	N/A	\$ 348,000	N/A
Rio Grande W&SR	604	\$ 193,000	\$ 319.50
Thomas Stone NHS	6,791	\$ 618,000	\$ 91.00
Maggie L. Walker NHS	9,222	\$ 605,000	\$ 65.60
Palo Alto Battlefield NHP	35,500	\$ 943,000	\$ 26.60
Edgar Allan Poe NHS	17,347	\$ 388,000	\$ 22.40
Saint Paul's Church NHS	14,926	\$ 286,000	\$ 18.00
Friendship Hill NHS	33,794	\$ 564,000	\$ 16.70
Santa Monica Mountains NRA	633,190	\$ 8,603,000	\$ 13.60
Kaloko Honokohau NHP	157,256	\$ 1,886,000	\$ 12.00
Jean Lafitte NHP & PRES	431,269	\$ 5,467,000	\$ 12.70
New River Gorge NR	1,116,219	\$ 7,386,000	\$ 6.60
San Antonio Missions NHP	581,805	\$ 3,797,000	\$ 6.50
Theodore Roosevelt NP	619,744	\$ 2,870,000	\$ 4.60
National Park Units	3,657,667	\$ 33,954,000	
<u>Other Areas Managed by NPS</u>			
Lewis & Clark NHT		\$2,007,000	
Oregon NHT		\$425,000	
Pinelands NR		\$305,000	
Total FY12 Budget Impact		\$ 36,691,000	

THOMAS STONE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE: CONGRESSMAN TRADES VOTE FOR
BURNT PORK

In the late 1970s, Representative Robert Bauman of Maryland was the appointed Republican “objector” for the House floor. The “objector” is stationed on the House floor to object to any bill proposed for unanimous consent that is not congruent with the party’s principles. In order to obtain Bauman’s support, Chairman Burton fed him a \$1 million park project to acquire a burned-out shell of a home in his district that had been severely damaged by fire a year earlier. This home, located near Port Tobacco, Maryland, was the residence of little-known signer of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Stone. Stone argued for reconciling with the British before changing his mind and becoming one of the 55 men who signed onto our founding document.

The provision creating Thomas Stone National Historic Site in the Parks Omnibus bill contradicted the official opinion of the Park Service Advisory Board, who had recommended against acquiring the property as a National Park Site, even *prior* to the home being gutted by a fire. The chief historical architect for the Park Service said of the Thomas Stone Historic Site that it represents just one example of “many things Congress has authorized which we feel are of marginal value and don’t meet the standards for inclusions in the National Park Service.”³²⁸

After the National Park Service was forced to purchase the recently burned estate from a private owner for \$525,000 in 1978, the Maryland home was not open to the public for two decades. Besides a temporary roof placed on the estate, renovations did not even begin at the house until 1994, when the house was compared to a “bombed-out structure from World War II.”³²⁹ These renovations included the construction of a \$420,000 restroom facility that more than doubled the median housing value in Charles County, Maryland at the time.³³⁰ The pricy facility was designed like a corncrib in order to blend in with the nearby subsistence farm structures.³³¹

Twenty years and \$4 million in tax dollars later, the Thomas Stone National Historic Site was finally opened to the public with predictions of annual visitation rates of

Thomas Stone NHS
Authorized: 1978
Visitors (2012): 6,791
Funding (2012):
\$618,000
Subsidy per Visitor:
\$91.00

Creation of the site usurped the official opinion of the Park Service Advisory Board, who had recommended against acquiring the property as a National Park Site, even *prior* to the home being gutted by a fire.

³²⁸ Marting Crutsinger, “Lack of funds leaves landmarks crumbling,” Beaver County (Pa.) Times, July 12th, 1981; <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2002&dat=19810712&id=MmYuAAAAIBAJ&sjid=vNkFAAAAIBAJ&pg=1482,2340500>.

³²⁹ “Maryland Home of Declaration of Independence Signer Restored, Reopened,” Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, January 11th, 1998.

³³⁰ “Charles County, Maryland,” City-Data.com website, accessed July 17, 2013; http://www.city-data.com/county/Charles_County-MD.html.

³³¹ “Delaware Water Gap is Privy to Outhouse That’s Commodious,” Pittsburg Post-Gazette, October 12, 1997.

50,000 people.³³² These predictions never came to fruition, as the site has yet to surpass 6,500 visitors in a single year and remains one of the nation's least visited national park units.³³³ When the front door chimes, one ranger working the site gets excited hoping that one of the infrequent visitors is coming to the house rather than a UPS driver.³³⁴

Today, the price for Robert Bauman's vote is \$629,000 in annual operating costs to a site that averages 17 visitors per day. With 9 full time employees working the site, the American taxpayers are paying nearly \$100 for every person who steps on the grounds.³³⁵ While current Maryland lawmakers have referred to the site as one of the most important historical spots in our nation, it appears the National Park's original evaluation that the site is of "marginal value" that does not meet the standard for inclusion in the NPS was a little more accurate.³³⁶



THE RESIDENCE OF THOMAS STONE, WHO HAD ARGUED FOR RECONCILING WITH THE BRITISH BEFORE CHANGING HIS MIND AND BECOMING ONE OF THE SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, BECAME A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AS A RESULT OF A CONGRESSIONAL EARMARK USED TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF THE CONGRESSMAN WHO REPRESENTED THE AREA IN WHICH THE HOUSE IS LOCATED. A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OFFICIAL NOTED THIS SITE REPRESENTS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF "MANY THINGS CONGRESS HAS AUTHORIZED WHICH WE FEEL ARE OF MARGINAL VALUE AND DON'T MEET THE STANDARDS FOR INCLUSIONS IN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE." THE PUBLIC OBVIOUSLY SHARES THIS VIEW SINCE FEWER THAN 20 PEOPLE VISIT THE SITE ON A GIVEN DAY.

³³² Todd Shields, "The Urge to Visit; Colonial Site Gaining Restrooms, Parking," The Washington Post, May 14, 1998.

³³³ "Thomas Stone NH Total Recreation Visitors," National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20Graph%20\(All%20Years\)?Park=THST](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20Graph%20(All%20Years)?Park=THST).

³³⁴ David A Fahrenthold, "Humble Md. Park Typifies Shift from Scenic to Cerebral; National System 'Uniquely American,' Unevenly Attended," The Washington Post, September 26, 2009.

³³⁵ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

³³⁶ "Maryland Home of Declaration of Independence Signer Restored, Reopened," Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, January 11, 1998.

PALO ALTO BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK - BATTLEFIELD
APPROVED BEFORE CONGRESS KNEW LOCATION

Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park is the location of the first major battle of the Mexican-American War, but poor planning led Congress to place it under the National Park Service's care before it knew exactly where the battle took place. Moreover, Congress failed to ensure NPS had the resources to care properly for the park, leaving it without a fully functioning visitor center for nearly three decades.

Congress designated the battlefield an NPS site in 1978 at a period of rapid growth in National Park Service properties. Congress, using park designations as political favors, added Palo Alto battlefield without a clear sense of where it should go or the resources needed to maintain it.

The need for NPS involvement, however, was not at all clear. As far back as 1893, the local Brownsville Military District marked the location of the battlefield as a historical landmark, and placed several monuments at key points.³³⁷ It was later named a national historic landmark by NPS in 1935 and was maintained by a combination of private owners and local historical organizations.³³⁸

Palo Alto NB

Authorized: 1978

Visitors (2012): 35,500

Funding (2012):

\$943,000

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$26.60

“Congress decided to add an area to the system but it didn't know where it was.”

While NPS has made improvements on the property, it did so at considerable cost and only after correcting Congress' original mistake. As a park service official described soon after the site was designated, “Congress decided to add an area to the system but it didn't know where it was.”³³⁹ In order to correct the Congressional mistake, the National Park Service “had to do all kinds of fancy archaeological work to find the thing.”³⁴⁰

Prior to passing the 1978 legislation no federal, state or local body had surveyed the land to know where the battle took place. And so, the legislation incorrectly marked the wrong location. This was discovered by NPS researchers, who looked at the historical and archaeological record in 1979 and determined a new survey needed to be done.³⁴¹

³³⁷ “A Thunder of Cannon: Archeology of the Mexican American War Battlefield of Palo Alto,” National Park Service Website, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/paal/thunder-cannon/chap3.htm, accessed August 12, 2013, Chapter 3.

³³⁸ “A Thunder of Cannon: Archeology of the Mexican American War Battlefield of Palo Alto,” National Park Service Website, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/paal/thunder-cannon/chap3.htm, accessed August 12, 2013, Chapter 3.

³³⁹ Peter Steinhart, “Our Cornered National Parks,” Boston Globe, September 28, 1980, H10.

³⁴⁰ Peter Steinhart, “Our Cornered National Parks,” Boston Globe, September 28, 1980, H10.

³⁴¹ “A Thunder of Cannon: Archeology of the Mexican American War Battlefield of Palo Alto,” National Park Service Website, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/paal/thunder-cannon/chap3.htm, accessed August 12, 2013, Chapter 3.

Thirteen years would pass before the new work would get started, only to be finished in 1993 – at which point Congress passed a new law to correct the problem.³⁴²

Resource constraints prevented NPS from building a visitors center on the site, however, until 2004, more than twenty-five years after Congress established it.³⁴³ Only after the doors were opened, though, did it become apparent that the visitor center was not adequately built. Within only six years significant problems surfaced – by 2010 NPS described the building as “aging”:

“the facility is showing signs that it is aging or needs a bit of refurbishing. Entrance doors have felt the effects of several hurricanes and no longer close as smoothly as in the past. The air conditioning system has proved inadequate for the high heat and humidity of the Rio Grande Valley and requires a redesign. Even the visitor center floor needs some adjustments to make it ready for the placement of new exhibits in 2011.”³⁴⁴

The result of the construction shut down the young visitor center for more than six weeks. Moreover, the exhibits referenced were nearly seven years late in arriving themselves, having been delayed by contract and management problems, as noted by NPS:

“The park originally hoped to unveil them shortly after the opening of the building in 2004. Instead, contract issues, reorganization of the National Park Service, and other issues caused a serious of delays [sic] to the project. At last, work resumed on the designs in 2010 and the exhibit producers are now placing finishes touches [sic] on the displays.”³⁴⁵

In 2009, Congress once again expanded the park to include another nearby battle site, adding 34 acres, as part of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009.³⁴⁶

While the National Park Service eventually found the battlefield site, it appears that most Americans still cannot as its attendance records reflect. In 2012, only 35,500 people visited the battlefield, meaning the nearly \$1 million budget for the site costs \$27 tax dollars per visitor.

³⁴² “A Thunder of Cannon: Archeology of the Mexican American War Battlefield of Palo Alto,” National Park Service Website, http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/paal/thunder-cannon/chap3.htm, accessed August 12, 2013, Chapter 3.

³⁴³ Barnette, Mic, “Family Tree: National Park Service celebrates opening of Palo Alto visitor center,” *Houston Chronicle*, January 24, 2004, <http://www.chron.com/life/article/Family-Tree-National-Park-Service-celebrates-1962009.php>

³⁴⁴ “Construction News – Palo Alto Battlefield,” National Park Service Website <http://www.nps.gov/paal/parknews/construction-news.htm>, accessed August 12, 2013

³⁴⁵ “Exhibiting Change – Palo Alto Battlefield,” National Park Service Website, <http://www.nps.gov/paal/parknews/exhibiting-change.htm>, accessed August 12, 2013.

³⁴⁶ Public Law 111-11



WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING WHERE IT WAS LOCATED, CONGRESS ADDED THE PALO ALTO NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, WHICH “HAD TO DO ALL KINDS OF FANCY ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK” TO LOCATE.³⁴⁷

EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE – TELL TALE PORK

As one of America’s most celebrated writers and poets, Edgar Allen Poe’s legacy is memorialized all around the country. Even a professional football team is named after a famous Poe poem. Unfortunately not all these tributes are created equal. The taxpayer-funded Edgar Allen Poe National Historic Site in Philadelphia is basically “an empty house” which most visitors “don’t understand what the site has to offer.”³⁴⁸

The Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is located in a city of 1.5 million people and is only one mile away from Independence National Historic Park, which had more than 3.5 million visitors in 2012. Yet despite the dense population, proximity to a popular national park unit, and the author’s cultural importance, the Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site had only 17,000 visitors in 2012. Even the National Park’s management plan notes the legislation “offers few insights into congressional aspirations for the park.”³⁴⁹ The site’s authorization, which Rep. Burton included in the 1978 omnibus package to secure the vote of Philadelphia Congressman Joshua Eilberg, only cites the

³⁴⁷ Peter Steinhart, “Our Cornered National Parks,” Boston Globe, September 28, 1980.

³⁴⁸ “Long Range Interpretive Plan: Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site,” National Park Service, December 2003; <http://www.nps.gov/edal/parkmgmt/planning.htm>.

³⁴⁹ “Long Range Interpretive Plan: Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site,” National Park Service, December 2003; <http://www.nps.gov/edal/parkmgmt/planning.htm>.

Edgar Allan Poe NHS

Authorized: 1978

Visitors (2012): 17,347

Funding (2012):

\$388,000

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$22.40

“The Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site does not include any items originally owned by Poe or his family. In fact, the site does not even replicate the appearance of the era in which Poe lived there during the 1840’s.”

“literary importance attained by Edgar Allan Poe’ as the single rationale for adding the unit to the National Park System.”³⁵⁰

During his lifetime, Edgar Allan Poe lived in many cities and even in a country cottage. Born in Boston and raised in Richmond, he later lived in Baltimore, New York, and Philadelphia for periods of time.³⁵¹

Poe fans have no shortage of sites to visit to celebrate his life and works. “As the city he is most closely identified with,”³⁵² Baltimore “lays claim to Edgar Allan Poe, going so far as to name its football team after his great poem.”³⁵³ The Edgar Allan Poe House and Museum in Baltimore, which is currently closed, is expected to reopen in October.³⁵⁴ Poe’s grave is also in Baltimore.³⁵⁵ The Edgar Allan Poe Museum is located in Richmond, Virginia,³⁵⁶ while the Edger Allan Poe Cottage where the

author “penned many of his most enduring poetical works” is located in the Bronx, New York.³⁵⁷

Even the visitors that do visit the Philadelphia site will not get a historically accurate representation of the home as it was when Poe briefly resided there between 1842-43. The Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site does not include any items originally owned by Poe or his family. In fact, the site does not even replicate the appearance of the era in which Poe lived there. The site is “simply a shell, with interior surfaces stripped to reveal historic wall finishes.”³⁵⁸ More issues raised in a 2003 Long Term Interpretive Site report included “many don’t understand what the site has to offer. They don’t

³⁵⁰ “Long Range Interpretive Plan: Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site,” National Park Service, December 2003; <http://www.nps.gov/edal/parkmgmt/planning.htm> .

³⁵¹ “Poe’s Life: Who is Edgar Allan Poe?,” The Edgar Allan Poe Museum website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.poemuseum.org/life.php> .

³⁵² Peter Schworm, “Boston honors Poe, a native son who shunned the city,” The Boston Globe, April 27, 2009; http://www.boston.com/news/local/breaking_news/2009/04/square_named_fo.html .

³⁵³ Seth Rolbein, “Connecting Edgar Allan Poe to His Birthplace, Boston,” Boston University Today, December 17, 2009; <http://www.bu.edu/today/2009/connecting-edgar-allan-poe-to-his-birthplace-boston/>.

³⁵⁴ Chris Kaltenbach, “Poe House reopening planned for October,” The Baltimore Sun, May 16, 2013; http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2013-05-16/entertainment/bs-ae-poe-house-20130516_1_poe-baltimore-edgar-allan-poe-house-mark-redfield .

³⁵⁵ Peter Schworm, “Boston honors Poe, a native son who shunned the city,” The Boston Globe, April 27, 2009; http://www.boston.com/news/local/breaking_news/2009/04/square_named_fo.html .

³⁵⁶ “About the Museum,” The Edgar Allan Poe Museum website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.poemuseum.org/about.php>.

³⁵⁷ “The Edger Allan Poe Cottage,” Bronx County Historical Society website, accessed July 22, 2013; <http://www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org/poecottage.html> .

³⁵⁸ “Imagining Poe: Symposium on Resource Management and Interpretation,” National Park Service, June 16, 2004; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/edal/edal_interpretation.pdf .

expect an ‘empty’ house” and “the current condition of the house raises questions about the quality of care and attention the building receives.”³⁵⁹

The excitement and anxiety that Poe’s mysteries engender with its readers will be the true and lasting legacy of Edgar Allan Poe, not the barren walls of his provisional residence.



THE EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN PHILADELPHIA DOES NOT REPLICATE THE APPEARANCE OF THE ERA OF WHEN POE BRIEFLY LIVED THERE.



THE EDGAR ALLAN POE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY ITEMS ORIGINALLY OWNED BY POE. THE SITE IS “SIMPLY A SHELL, WITH INTERIOR SURFACES STRIPPED TO REVEAL HISTORIC WALL FINISHES.”³⁶⁰

³⁵⁹ “Long Range Interpretive Plan: Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site,” National Park Service, December 2003; <http://www.nps.gov/edal/parkmgmt/planning.htm> .

³⁶⁰ “Imagining Poe: Symposium on Resource Management and Interpretation,” National Park Service, June 16, 2004; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/edal/edal_interpretation.pdf .

SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE- MINISTER STRETCHES
TRUTH TO ATTAIN PARK STATUS AND RETAIN REPUTATION

When Rev. Harold T. Weigle took the helm of Saint Paul's Church as its new rector in 1929, he was a rising star in the Episcopal Diocese of New York. Only 30 years old, Weigle counted prestigious degrees from both Cornell and Virginia Theological Seminary and already had spent years conducting missionary work abroad in China. Far removed from the humble hamlets of rural China, however, was the post Weigle held immediately before arriving at Saint Paul's: Chaplain to the Episcopal Actors' Guild at the posh Church of the Transfiguration in Manhattan.

Located a matter of blocks north of the Bronx, Saint Paul's was at once just a few miles uptown of the Church of the Transfiguration yet also worlds away. What was once the quaint colonial settlement of Eastchester had given way to a stretch of industrial blight in what was now the town of Mount Vernon. The newly installed Weigle found himself the shepherd of a church hemorrhaging parishioners, resources, and morale. Weigle calculated that he could invigorate his parish by leveraging the historic church's supposed involvement in the "Election of 1733," which Weigle insisted was a watershed event that led to the incorporation of the freedom of the press into the pantheon of American civil liberties.

The press coverage of fraud committed by local law enforcement officials in Eastchester during a 1733 election landed a New York newspaper editor, John Zenger, in jail. Unluckily for Zenger, his targets were allies of the heavy-handed royal governor. Although at trial the presiding judge instructed the jury to pronounce Zenger guilty, the jury nullified the judge, setting Zenger free. Identifying this incident as a defining moment for the establishment of freedom of the press in the colonies, Weigle pitched the idea to both private and public interests in the hope that preservation funding could save Saint Paul's. He called for the establishment of no less than "The National Shrine of the Bill of Rights" at the church, and the first sermon he preached at Saint Paul's was an appeal for \$3.75 million (adjusted for inflation).³⁶¹

There were two issues with this plan. First, while the prevailing view during Weigle's tenure was that the events of 1733 were a somewhat significant development in our colonial history, the importance Weigle placed on the election was "cited as an exaggeration by qualified historians."³⁶² Secondly, even if one considered the Election of 1733 to be a pivotal event, Saint Paul's did not play a sizable role in it. For instance,

Saint Paul's Church NHS

Authorized: 1943 / 1978

Visitors (2012): 15,911

Funding (2012):

\$286,000

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$18.00

*"Nobody told any lies,
but..."*

³⁶¹ Bill Fallon, "Financing a piece of history," Westchester County Business Journal, February 28, 2011.

³⁶² David Osborn, "William H. Weigle: Developer of St. Paul's as a Historic Site," National Park Service, August 2011; <http://www.nps.gov/sapa/historyculture/upload/Weigle.pdf>.

while Zenger was arrested for writing about the Election of 1733, he never actually set foot near Saint Paul's or the city of Mount Vernon.³⁶³ Rev. Weigle "overemphasized the link with freedom of the press," stated Dick Forliano, who served seven years as chairman of the Society of the National Shrine of the Bill of Rights, the organization that jointly operates Saint Paul's NHS with the Park Service. "Nobody told any lies, but the meaning may have gotten misconstrued."³⁶⁴

And so it began that Weigle would take liberties with historical fact to ensure his pride would not be wounded. A shuttered church would be a stain on an otherwise impressive resume. "In no way did he want to preside over a declining parish."³⁶⁵ To protect his version of the truth, Weigle went so far as to sack an established member of the vestry over a minute point of grammar in the proposed Shrine's title. According to a National Park Service report:

Lyon Boston, a well regarded [sic] New York City lawyer and St. Paul's parishioner, was among Father Weigle's chief supporters on the vestry, but he favored a more modest interpretation of the election. Boston noted that it was more accurate to call St. Paul's "a" shrine to the Bill of Rights, and not "THE" birthplace of the bill of rights. He advanced an understanding of the events of 1733 as one of many developments that contributed to the tradition of political, press and religious freedoms in America. That more reserved interpretation, Boston argued, would attract increased support among informed people. But Weigle insisted that St. Paul's was uniquely the national birthplace of civil liberties, and eventually pushed Boston off the vestry and reduced his role in an organization created to fulfill the church's standing as the home of the Bill of Rights.³⁶⁶

Much to the chagrin of his parishioners, Weigle insisted on prohibiting all non-marble gravestones in the church's graveyard, arguing that other—more durable and popular—materials would detract from the 18th century aesthetic he was aiming for the church to put forth. Additionally, he ordered the removal of all ironwork in the graveyard, and he rearranged the pew structure inside to conform to the church's 18th century layout. All was done with Weigle's firm insistence that his plan was the only approach to save the parish, and he "would not permit what he perceived as provincial, personal and unenlightened protests to stall the realization of that agenda." As a result, families eventually left Saint Paul's for other churches.³⁶⁷

The site was declared a national historic site in 1943. Six years later, Weigle's tenure at Saint Paul's would come to end, his dream to save Saint Paul's was fulfilled, but at a

³⁶³ Bill Fallon, "Financing a piece of history," Westchester County Business Journal, February 28, 2011.

³⁶⁴ Bill Fallon, "Financing a piece of history," Westchester County Business Journal, February 28, 2011.

³⁶⁵ Bill Fallon, "Financing a piece of history," Westchester County Business Journal, February 28, 2011.

³⁶⁶ David Osborn, "William H. Weigle: Developer of St. Paul's as a Historic Site," National Park Service, August 2011; <http://www.nps.gov/sapa/historyculture/upload/Weigle.pdf>.

³⁶⁷ Bill Fallon, "Financing a piece of history," Westchester County Business Journal, February 28, 2011.

steep price. Only 35 families remained at Saint Paul’s in 1980, when the Diocese of New York finally gave up on the nearly empty old church and sold it to the National Park Service.³⁶⁸ Although admission is free, Saint Paul’s NHS is among the least visited of all New York City’s National Park Service units, attracting on average less than 50 visitors per day.



ST. PAUL’S HAD DIFFICULTY FILLING PEWS BOTH AS A CHURCH AND AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FORT SCOTT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE- POLITICIAN HELPS FORT OF “NO HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE” NICKEL AND DIME ITS WAY INTO THE PARK SYSTEM

Built in 1842, the Fort Scott Army Base served our troops for about three decades. It saw limited action during both the 1850s as “Bleeding Kansas” erupted and also during the Civil War as one of the Union’s western outposts. By the mid twentieth century, however, the old fort was “essentially a slum.” The three remaining buildings of the fort were in shambles and were being used as a mix of low-rent apartments and storage units. Numerous lawmakers attempted to save Fort Scott, but they could convince neither Congress nor the National Park Service to take interest in the decrepit fort. The Park Service had at various times described the site as being of “no importance,” “not nationally important,” and of “no historical significance.”³⁶⁹

Kansas Representative Joe Skubitz had been a congressional staffer for 20 years prior to taking office and knew the inner workings of the Hill before his election. Yearning to be assigned to the powerful House Appropriations Committee, Skubitz faced one of his first—and few—disappointments in Washington when he was assigned instead to the Interior Affairs Committee. But he

Fort Scott NHS
 Authorized: 1978
 Visitors (2012): 26,079
 Funding (2012):
 \$1,321,000
 Subsidy per Visitor:
 \$50.70

“The Park Service had at various times described the site as being of ‘no importance,’ ‘not nationally important,’ and of ‘no historical significance.’”

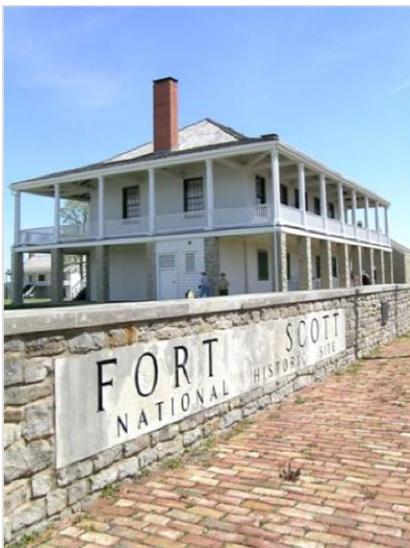
³⁶⁸ Franklin Whitehouse, “Museum gets first state aid,” The New York Times, March 24, 1985.

³⁶⁹ Jim Fisher, “Fort built on a dime here, nickel there: A patient approach to government funding led to site’s success,” Kansas City Star, September 21, 1997.

was reassured the committee does “nice things for people.” Afterward, Skubitz recalled, “A light bulb went on over my head.”³⁷⁰

The lawmaker launched into rescue Fort Scott. Skubitz first took action in 1964, sprinkling Fort Scott with a tiny \$25,000 appropriation. Under the radar, he was successful at showering the fort with more money year after year: \$46,000, \$116,000, \$188,000, and \$493,000.³⁷¹

With each successive yearly appropriation, Fort Scott was incrementally transformed to a national treasure in the eyes of the public and, more importantly, the National Park Service. Decaying structures were restored. Studies specifically designed to underscore the historical significance of the fort were undertaken. The Park Service eventually changed its tune on the importance of Fort Scott, and in 1978 the site became the newest addition to the National Park System. Skubitz left Congress that year, the total amount of federal funding he had secured over the years for Fort Scott totaling over \$5 million.³⁷²



“If I’d asked for it in one lump sum, they’d have laughed me out of Washington,” remarked Skubitz. “What it took was patience. And the friends I had.”³⁷³

In 2012, the park received \$1,321,000 in general funding.

PRIOR TO ITS ESTABLISHMENT AS A NATIONAL PARK UNIT, FORT SCOTT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE HAD BEEN DESCRIBED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AS BEING “NOT NATIONALLY IMPORTANT” AND HAVING “NO HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE.”

³⁷⁰ Jim Fisher, “Fort built on a dime here, nickel there: A patient approach to government funding led to site’s success,” *Kansas City Star*, September 21, 1997.

³⁷¹ Jim Fisher, “Fort built on a dime here, nickel there: A patient approach to government funding led to site’s success,” *Kansas City Star*, September 21, 1997.

³⁷² Jim Fisher, “Fort built on a dime here, nickel there: A patient approach to government funding led to site’s success,” *Kansas City Star*, September 21, 1997.

³⁷³ Jim Fisher, “Fort built on a dime here, nickel there: A patient approach to government funding led to site’s success,” *Kansas City Star*, September 21, 1997.

RIO GRANDE WILD & SCENIC RIVER: THE RIVER TO NOWHERE

A 176-mile stretch of the Rio Grande River is the second most expensive National Park unit per visitor, costing \$320 in operating funds for each of the 604 visitors in 2012.³⁷⁴ Created by Congress in 1978, the Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River in Texas is one of two official park units that are designated as a “wild & scenic river.”

The National Park Service proclaims “quiet and solitude are rare qualities in today’s modern world, but ones that exemplify the majesty of the Rio Grande.”³⁷⁵ Indeed, this park unit averages less than 2 visitors per day while costing the taxpayers \$176,000.

Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River

Authorized: 1978

Visitors (2012): 604

Funding (2012): \$193,000

Subsidy per Visitor: \$319.50

This isolated unit averages less than two visitors per day while costing the taxpayers \$176,000 annually



ON A BUSY DAY, THE RIO GRANDE WILD & SCENIC RIVER MIGHT ATTRACT TWO OR MORE VISITORS.

³⁷⁴ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

³⁷⁵ “Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River: Plan Your Visit,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/rigr/planyourvisit/index.htm>.

EBEY'S LANDING NATIONAL HISTORICAL RESERVE – AREA OF "QUESTIONABLE
NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE" SOUGHT FEDERAL DESIGNATION TO WARD OFF
DEVELOPMENT

Located in the center of Whidbey Island in Washington State, Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve (NHR) was supposedly created to preserve the natural landscape as well as the manmade structures of early American settlers in the Northwest. It is named after Colonel Isaac Neff Ebey, one of the first to file claim on the land after the passage of the Donation Land Law of 1850, which offered free land in the newly organized Oregon Territory.³⁷⁶ Ebey "became a leading figure in public affairs, but his life was cut short in 1857, when he was slain by northern coastal Indians seeking revenge for the killing of one of their own chieftains."³⁷⁷

While emphasizing its national, historical and cultural significance, the area was

Ebey's Landing NHR

Authorized: 1978

Visitors (2012): N/A

Funding (2012): \$348,000

Subsidy per Visitor: N/A

The fate of the Reserve,
"ultimately rested less on its own
merits than on powerful
congressional support."

transformed into a NPS unit primarily to protect residents from outside developers. In fact, the area's path to becoming a NPS unit is a classic story of parochial politics.

With most of the property on the island privately owned, it had "the potential to be developed."³⁷⁸ Faced with the prospect of new condominiums being constructed on some of Whidbey Island's prime open space, the island's residents organized to head off development.³⁷⁹

The activists failed to convince the local county commissioners to halt rezoning. Then Washington's governor rejected their lobbying efforts for the state to purchase the property. Likewise, the NPS regional director in Seattle was cool to the proposal of adding the area to the National Park System. The concern was "that Ebey's Landing lacked true national historical significance.... the proposed unit represented failure on the part of county and state agencies to resolve a land zoning issue. The real thrust of the movement to preserve Ebey's Landing was to prevent the loss of a rural landscape to

³⁷⁶ "Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve History & Culture," National Park Service website, accessed June 18, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/ebla/historyculture/index.htm>.

³⁷⁷ "Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve History & Culture," National Park Service website, accessed June 18, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/ebla/historyculture/index.htm>.

³⁷⁸ "An Unbroken Historical Record: Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve: Administrative History," National Park Service website, May 27, 2000; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ebla/adhi/chap4.htm.

³⁷⁹ "Cooperative Conservation Case Study: Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve; Community Commits to Conserving Land and History," Cooperative Conservation website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.cooperativeconservation.org/viewproject.asp?pid=955>.

the forces of suburbanization.”³⁸⁰ The Department of Interior’s assistant secretary for fish and wildlife and parks also opposed the proposal citing the lack of a federal study of the area and “questionable national significance.”³⁸¹

The activists, however, received a much more supportive audience in Washington, DC. “Although he was not at first convinced that federal protection was the appropriate solution,” Congressman Lloyd Meeds said it would be “criminal” if Ebey’s Landing was “allowed to slip into cluttered private development.” Meeds introduced a bill to turn the area into an unusual park unit that would be known as a “national historical reserve.”³⁸² Washington Senator Henry Jackson, chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resource Committee, introduced the Ebey’s Landing bill in the Senate.³⁸³ When the proposal to create Ebey’s Landing NHR was being considered, an analysis by an aide to Senator Jackson concluded, “a long-term role for the National Park Service at Ebey’s Landing is not necessary.”³⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the Reserve was added to the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. According to NPS records, the fate of the Reserve “ultimately rested less on its own merits than on powerful congressional support.”

Ebey’s Landing became the first and remains the National Park Service’s only national historic reserve, which has an unusual management system.³⁸⁵ The reserve is overseen by a nine-member board, known as the Trust Board of Ebey’s Landing NHR, appointed by various units of government rather than being elected by its residents.³⁸⁶

The intent to preserve the area by turning its management over to unelected commissioners has predictably slowed development, but it has also resulted in several land controversies.³⁸⁷ For example, local planning commissions have established a “color palette” of limited hues homeowners within Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve may paint their homes.³⁸⁸ If a desired color is not on the approved list, “other color choices can be presented to the commission for review.”³⁸⁹ New construction is also subject to commission design review and approval. These reviews are conducted by

³⁸⁰ “An Unbroken Historical Record: Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve: Administrative History,” National Park Service website, May 27, 2000; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ebla/adhi/chap4.htm .

³⁸¹ “An Unbroken Historical Record: Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve: Administrative History,” National Park Service website, May 27, 2000; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ebla/adhi/chap4.htm .

³⁸² “An Unbroken Historical Record: Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve: Administrative History,” National Park Service website, May 27, 2000; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ebla/adhi/chap4.htm .

³⁸³ “An Unbroken Historical Record: Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve: Administrative History,” National Park Service website, May 27, 2000; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ebla/adhi/chap4.htm .

³⁸⁴ “An Unbroken Historical Record: Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve: Administrative History,” National Park Service website, May 27, 2000; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/ebla/adhi/chap4.htm .

³⁸⁵ Joel Connelly, “In the Northwest: Politicians bridge political divide to save ‘paradise,’” Seattle Post-Intelligencer, March 29, 2005; <http://www.seattlepi.com/default/article/In-the-Northwest-Politicians-bridge-political-1169742.php#page-1>.

³⁸⁶ “Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve Management,” National Park Service website, accessed June 18, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/ebla/parkmgmt/index.htm> .

³⁸⁷ Nathan Whalen, “Palette colors land use controversy on Central Whidbey,” Whidbey News Times, August 27, 2009; <http://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/news/55411327.html> .

³⁸⁸ Nathan Whalen, “Palette colors land use controversy on Central Whidbey,” Whidbey News Times, August 27, 2009; <http://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/news/55411327.html> .

³⁸⁹ “Things You Need to Know: Proposed Changes to Design Review in Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve,” Island County website, accessed June 19, 2013; http://www.islandcounty.net/Planning/documents/DesignReviewExecutiveSummary8_18_09.pdf

the appointed Ebey's Reserve Historic Preservation Commission to ensure "certain standards that respect past traditions and compatibility with the Reserve's character, thereby retaining strong property values for the entire community."³⁹⁰ The board's staff even decides the height of fences (must be less than six feet high) and fate of dilapidated structures ("An Ebey's Reserve building in the National Register cannot be demolished, except in cases of economic hardship.")³⁹¹

Some property owners are concerned about being subjected to rules made by unelected commissioners. One resident called the regulations an "unfair insertion into the lives of people by unelected officials," while another said, "someone telling me what I can do with my property is stripping me of my property rights."³⁹²

No official count exists on the number of visitors to Ebey's Landing NHR, and the unit, which employs one full time NPS employee, costs the NPS about \$350,000 a year.³⁹³ However, the reserve has also been the recipient of millions of dollars in congressional earmarks. Former Senator Slade Gorton "used his Appropriations Committee clout to secure more than \$3 million for Ebey's Landing."³⁹⁴ In 2008, the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve received a \$492,000 congressional earmark to bail out the Nature Conservancy of Washington, which "went into debt purchasing 407 acres of woods and other land in the heart of the reserve", and to purchase development rights for some property.³⁹⁵ "The purchase of development rights," according to the reserve's manager, "is a great way to protect land from development. The landowners keep the land but cannot build any type of development on the property. This fits into the reserve's mission of protecting land without owning large areas outright."³⁹⁶

With the majority of the land not even accessible to the public, it is clear the Reserve's set up was designed more to preserve the area for its residents rather than to promote and invite outsiders to visit.

According to the Department of Interior, "to be eligible for favorable consideration as a unit of the National Park System, an area must possess nationally significant natural, cultural, or recreational resources; be a suitable and feasible addition to the system; and require direct NPS management instead of protection by some other governmental

³⁹⁰ "Things You Need to Know: Proposed Changes to Design Review in Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve," Island County website, accessed June 19, 2013; http://www.islandcounty.net/Planning/documents/DesignReviewExecutiveSummary8_18_09.pdf

³⁹¹ "Things You Need to Know: Proposed Changes to Design Review in Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve," Island County website, accessed June 19, 2013; http://www.islandcounty.net/Planning/documents/DesignReviewExecutiveSummary8_18_09.pdf

³⁹² Nathan Whalen, "Palette colors land use controversy on Central Whidbey," Whidbey News Times, August 27, 2009; <http://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/news/55411327.html>

³⁹³ National Park Service statistics for Fiscal Years '11 and '12.

³⁹⁴ Joel Connelly, "In the Northwest: Politicians bridge political divide to save 'paradise,'" Seattle Post-Intelligencer, March 29, 2005; <http://www.seattlepi.com/default/article/In-the-Northwest-Politicians-bridge-political-1169742.php#page-1>.

³⁹⁵ "2008 Earmarks," White House Office of Management and Budget website, accessed June 25, 2013; http://earmarks.omb.gov/earmarks-public/2008-earmarks/earmark_365593.html

³⁹⁶ "Reserve gets \$1 million," Whidbey News-Times, July 3, 2008; <http://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/news/22073849.html#>

agency or by the private sector [emphasis added].”³⁹⁷ These reserves, however, are managed by a management board, which includes a representative from NPS, but are not managed by the federal agency itself therefore making it inconsistent with criteria set for national park units.

While Ebey’s Landing was the first National Historical Reserve, groups in other areas are now considering seeking a similar status for their communities to fend off new businesses and other types of development. Residents of the Village of Joshua Tree in California, for example, are discussing organizing their area into a reserve to halt a casino and the chain store Dollar General.³⁹⁸ The superintendent of Joshua Tree National Park advised citizens they can succeed if “you work to get local, regional, state and national political support.”³⁹⁹

Of course, the local residents who have demonstrated a commitment to preserving their community, its culture, history, and landscape could continue to do so without any type of federal designation.



ENGLE CARRIAGE HOUSE, THE CROCKETT FARM MOTOR SHED, AND THE SHERMAN FARM BULK SHED ARE AMONG THE MORE THAN 400 HISTORIC BUILDINGS BEING PRESERVED WITHIN THE EBHEY’S LANDING NATIONAL HISTORICAL RESERVE.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁷ “Criteria for New National Parks,” National Park Service website, accessed June 24, 2013;

<http://planning.nps.gov/document/Criteria%20for%20New%20Parklands.pdf> .

³⁹⁸ “Community Meeting: Joshua Tree National Conservation and Historic Reserve,” Joshua Tree Barnstormer, January 20, 2012;

<http://jtbarnstormer.com/2012/01/20/community-meeting-national-conservation-and-historic-reserve/>

³⁹⁹ Rebecca Unger, “Group takes first step to making Joshua Tree a reserve,” Hi-Desert Star, February 7, 2012;

http://www.hidesertstar.com/news/article_10c9eaba-520f-11e1-9e63-0019bb2963f4.html?TNNoMobile .

⁴⁰⁰ Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve Facebook page, accessed June 20, 2013;

<https://www.facebook.com/EbeysLandingNHR> .

PATERSON GREAT FALLS NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK - CONGRESS
ESTABLISHED PARK AFTER THREE YEAR STUDY CONCLUDES THE SITE IS NOT
SUITABLE, NOT FEASIBLE, AND NOT NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT

The Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park is the latest Congressional addition to the National Park System.⁴⁰¹ In approving, Congress ignored an extensive three-year National Park Service study of the area that found that the site failed to meet any of the criteria for becoming part of the National Park System. The study concluded “the resources of the Great Falls Historic District are not suitable for inclusion in the national park system.”⁴⁰² Further, the “estimated costs associated with the Great Falls Historic District are not feasible when considering the impact that such costs would have on existing units of the national park system in the Northeast Region.”⁴⁰³

Nonetheless, sponsors of this legislation successfully moved to make it the 397th park unit in the National Park System. The main sponsor and reportedly strongest proponent of the park’s designation was the mayor of Paterson, New Jersey, for more than 6 years prior to being elected to Congress.

After ignoring the findings of the National Park Service’s study, local leaders hoped that restoring the “historically significant landmark” that has “fallen into a state of neglect” with federal tax dollars will help provide an economic boost to the “postindustrial city struggling with drugs, crime and unemployment.”⁴⁰⁴ Previously, the Great Falls Historic District had received \$3.3 million in federal funds as part of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 that could be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis with local funds. During Senate testimony on the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park Act, a former NPS official disclosed that no local matching funds were made available during the 11-year span of the grant.⁴⁰⁵

Paterson Great Falls NHP
Established: 2011
Visitors (2012): N/A
Funding (2012): \$350,000

“...this study concludes that the resources of the Great Falls Historic District are not suitable for inclusion in the national park system”

Two years after a White House ceremony “that bestowed the long-awaited national park status on Paterson’s landmark falls, the area is still littered with trash, graffiti and a run-

⁴⁰¹ “Public Law 111-11,” Government Printing Office website, March 30, 2009; <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ11/pdf/PLAW-111publ11.pdf> .

⁴⁰² “Great Falls Historic District Special Resource Study Chapter 3: Analyses of National Significance, Suitability, Feasibility and Need for NPS Management,” National Park Service Website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkId=261&projectId=16673&documentID=17397> .

⁴⁰³ “Great Falls Historic District Special Resource Study Chapter 3: Analyses of National Significance, Suitability, Feasibility and Need for NPS Management,” National Park Service Website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkId=261&projectId=16673&documentID=17397> .

⁴⁰⁴ Jacqueline Mroz, “The Great Falls: Power for Another Revolution?,” The New York Times, March 27, 2009; <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/29/nyregion/new-jersey/29fallsnj.html?pagewanted=all> .

⁴⁰⁵ “Senate Report 110-376- Patterson Great Falls National Historic Park Act,” June 16, 2008; [http://www.lis.gov/cgi-lis/cpquery/R?cp110:FLD010:@1\(sr376\)](http://www.lis.gov/cgi-lis/cpquery/R?cp110:FLD010:@1(sr376)) .

down, forlorn feeling of neglect,” including a floating tire in the river near the falls, a New Jersey newspaper reported.⁴⁰⁶ A recent visit to the falls found trash littered throughout, overgrown grass, and a significant level of graffiti, including on the statue of Alexander Hamilton.⁴⁰⁷



GRAFFITI CAN BE FOUND THROUGHOUT THE PATERSON GREAT FALLS NHP

The congressman who “campaign[ed] for years in Congress to rescue the falls from neglect” had divulged that he was told after the bill signing that he “should expect to wait ‘about 12 years’ before the park is ready to open.”⁴⁰⁸ The delay in opening a fully functional park is blamed on both management delays—the need to set up committees and hold meetings—and a lack of money. The limited resources the park does have may have to be used to pay rent at a facility that the Park Service will eventually acquire after the owner complained that “they’re spending money in the community, but they’re not paying any rent and they’re not paying for their utilities.”⁴⁰⁹ The park’s budget was set at \$250,000 but at least \$10 million is necessary “to really have an operation under way,” according to a park official who is overseeing the set up.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁶ Mike Kelly, “Trash piling up at Great Falls; Site was approved in ’09 for historic park,” The Record, March 28, 2011; http://www.northjersey.com/columnists/Trash_piling_up_at_site_approved_in_09_for_historic_park.html.

⁴⁰⁷ August 8, 2013 trip to Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park by staff of Senator Tom Coburn.

⁴⁰⁸ Mike Kelly, “Trash piling up at Great Falls; Site was approved in ’09 for historic park,” The Record, March 28, 2011; http://www.northjersey.com/columnists/Trash_piling_up_at_site_approved_in_09_for_historic_park.html.

⁴⁰⁹ Joe Malinconico, “Paterson utilities authority seeks end to national park’s rent-free status,” Paterson Press, July 24, 2013; http://www.northjersey.com/paterson/Paterson_utilities_authority_seeks_end_to_national_parks_rent-free_status.html.

⁴¹⁰ Mike Kelly, “Trash piling up at Great Falls; Site was approved in ’09 for historic park,” The Record, March 28, 2011; http://www.northjersey.com/columnists/Trash_piling_up_at_site_approved_in_09_for_historic_park.html?c=y&page=3.



DISREGARDING THE CONCERNS OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, CONGRESS ESTABLISHED THE PATERSON GREAT FALLS NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK IN 2009. A COSTLY ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN UP COULD COST AS MUCH AS \$10 MILLION, FAR MORE THAN CONGRESS PROVIDED FOR WHEN IT CREATED THE PARK.

FIRST LADIES NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE – A NATIONAL PRIORITY OR PAROCHIAL PORK?

The First Ladies National Historic Site in Canton, Ohio became the 386th unit of the National Park System in 2000. The Founder and President of the National First Ladies' Library is Mary Regula, wife of the lead sponsor of the bill that created a federal funding stream for her library.⁴¹¹

One of the previous concerns raised was that when Ms. Regula started the First Ladies Museum she hired an “acquaintance” that had little training in historic preservation. Previously, she had also “discouraged Park Service involvement in her plan to install an interactive exhibit” at the Museum.⁴¹² The Museum “operates with a remarkable degree

⁴¹¹ Drew Johnson, “Taxpayers Come Last at First Ladies’ Museum,” Newsmax, March 23, 2012; <http://www.newsmax.com/DrewJohnson/Canton-First-Ladies-National-Historic-Site-wasteful-spending/2012/03/23/id/433732> .

⁴¹² Matt Stearns, Congressman’s gift to wife true treasure, and critics take note, Knight Ridder Newspapers, June 18, 2006, http://seattletimes.com/html/politics/2003068949_regula18.html .

First Ladies NHS

Established: 2000

Visitors (2012): 9,063

Funding (2012):

\$997,000

Subsidy per visitor:

\$110.00

Some husbands give their wives jewelry, some flowers, but in the case of Representative Regula, he got his wife a National Park

of autonomy” from the National Park Service even though the federal government pays a significant portion of the operating costs.⁴¹³

The park was created by an appropriations bill that’s purpose is to provide funding for Interior agency programs, without any hearings or studies, and without being in any legislation prior to its inclusion in the conference report after both the House and Senate had already voted.

Perhaps a study or hearing on the necessity of the library as part of the National Park System would have found what we now know. The National Park Service spends nearly **one million dollars** per year on a site that only

accommodated 9,063 visitors in 2012. That equates to the American taxpayers funding the 25 daily visitors at \$110 each.

In total, the museum has received more than \$10 million from the federal government since it was opened in 2000. This includes a 2009 congressional earmark for \$124,000 that was spent “to catalogue every book purchased by First Lady Abigail Fillmore for the White House during Millard’s presidency, and then purchase duplicates of those books for the Library’s collection.”⁴¹⁴ A 2008 exhibit featured papier-mâché replicas of nine presidential pets, such as Barney Bush.⁴¹⁵



AMONG THE ATTRACTIONS AT THE FIRST LADIES NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE ARE DUPLICATIVE COPIES OF BOOKS PURCHASED BY FIRST LADY ABIGAIL FILLMORE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE AND A 2008 EXHIBIT FEATURING PAPIER-MÂCHÉ REPLICAS OF NINE PRESIDENTIAL PETS, SUCH AS BARNEY BUSH.

⁴¹³ Matt Stearns, Congressman's gift to wife true treasure, and critics take note, Knight Ridder Newspapers, June 18, 2006, http://seattletimes.com/html/politics/2003068949_regula18.html

⁴¹⁴ Drew Johnson, “Taxpayers Come Last at First Ladies’ Museum,” Newsmax, March 23, 2012; <http://www.newsmax.com/DrewJohnson/Canton-First-Ladies-National-Historic-Site-wasteful-spending/2012/03/23/id/433732> .

⁴¹⁵ “White House “Tails”: Pets of the First Families,” First Ladies National Historic Site website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.firstladies.org/documents/petprogram2.pdf> .

STEAMTOWN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE - A \$150 MILLION THEME PARK GIVEAWAY

Described as a “Walt Disney movie set that will be absolutely phony from the word go,” Steamtown USA has the ignoble distinction of being saved from bankruptcy by the United States Congress.⁴¹⁶

Steamtown USA was originally founded by railroad enthusiast F. Nelson Blount, who started collecting vintage locomotives and rolling stock in the 1950’s.⁴¹⁷ After Blount died in a plane wreck in 1967, his train collection was moved to Bellows Falls, Vermont.⁴¹⁸ After an unsuccessful stint where the museum could only attract 17,000 annual visitors, the collection of 39 vintage engines and over 100 train cars was relocated to Scranton, Pennsylvania, in 1984.⁴¹⁹ This move came with much fanfare and projections of hundreds of thousands of visitors per year.⁴²⁰

Four years after the move to Scranton, Steamtown USA was \$2.2 million in debt and on the verge of bankruptcy.⁴²¹ Fortunately for the museum, a powerful lawmaker was about to change the fate of this unsuccessful venture forever.

A National Park Service official warned Congress “the federal government will not become a dumping ground for white elephants.... If Steamtown officials want our money so they can continue to operate the excursion, we are not interested.”⁴²² NPS had already rejected the inclusion of Steamtown USA when it was located in Vermont, stating the collection “didn’t fit our basic missions, to preserve historic sites, actual places that are significant in American history.”⁴²³

Steamtown NHS

Authorized: 1988
Visitors (2012): 108,072
Funding (2012):
\$5,624,000
Subsidy per Visitor:
\$52.00

“A third-rate collection in a place to which it has no relevance.”

- John H. White Jr.,
Smithsonian
transportation curator

⁴¹⁶ Michael DeCourcy Hinds, “As ‘Steamtown’ Grows, So Does Parks Debate,” The New York Times, November 23, 1991;

<http://www.nytimes.com/1991/11/23/us/as-steamtown-grows-so-does-parks-debate.html?pagewanted=3&src=pm>

⁴¹⁷ “History & Culture,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/stea/historyculture/index.htm>

⁴¹⁸ Jennene Orlando, “\$20 Million Allocated: Federal Appropriation Puts Steamtown USA on Track,” Lehigh Valley Business Digest, March 1987.

⁴¹⁹ “Scranton Hopes Museum Will Get City Back on Track Pennsylvania:,” Morning Call, February 6, 1984.

⁴²⁰ “Rail Museum on Track to New Home,” Reading Eagle, December 27, 1983;

<http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=wo8zAAAAIBAJ&sjid=OuQFAAAAIBAJ&pg=4956,4218912&dq=steamtown+visitors&hl=en>

⁴²¹ Randy Kraft, “Steamtown USA Due to Lack of Funds, Trains Sidetracked For 1988,” Morning Call, January 31, 1988.

⁴²² “A Tale of Piggery,” Newsweek, April 12, 1992; <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/1992/04/12/a-tale-of-piggery.html>. Excerpted from “Adventures in Porkland,” a book by Brian Kelly (published by Villard/Random House).

⁴²³ Michael DeCourcy Hinds, “As ‘Steamtown’ Grows, So Does Parks Debate,” The New York Times, November 23, 1991; <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/11/23/us/as-steamtown-grows-so-does-parks-debate.html?pagewanted=3&src=pm>.

These facts were not enough to keep local congressman and key appropriations committee member, Rep. Joe McDade, from earmarking \$8 million in funding and creating a “historic” designation for Steamtown USA on a must-pass appropriations bill, putting the museum on track for permanent federal funding.⁴²⁴ Without ever being considered before a Congressional committee, and despite the administration proposing to strip the earmark from the budget citing that no park service feasibility study for the project had been conducted, Steamtown USA became the newest unit in the National Park Service.⁴²⁵

The rarity of how Steamtown USA became part of the National Park System through a spending bill was underscored by the NPS assistant director for planning, James Stewart, stating “the thing about Steamtown is it was a very backdoor way of creating an area.” After informing a reporter that NPS never had an opportunity to evaluate Steamtown, Stewart said “Congress is Congress, whether they tell us to do it in appropriations or authorization, it’s our duty to go ahead with it.”⁴²⁶



Thus, the National Park Service was forced to purchase what a former Smithsonian transportation curator called “a third-rate collection in a place to which it has no relevance.” Of the 29 locomotives acquired with the collection, only three were operational. The 85 other pieces of rolling stock had been stored outdoors for decades and had not seen a paintbrush in more than three decades.⁴²⁷ Prior to the official grand opening of the park in 1995, 24 of the 100 pieces were in such poor condition that they were moved to a nearby Army depot in order to get them out of sight.⁴²⁸ Given the deteriorating conditions of the new federal possession, it is not a surprise that the original 1986 earmark would not be sufficient. Taxpayers would pay for an additional \$73 million in renovations for Steamtown over the next seven years.⁴²⁹

Outside observers would label Steamtown as the “the mother of all pork barrel”⁴³⁰ and “a virtual pork poster child.”⁴³¹ Some elected officials called the museum a “national disgrace” with others calling the park “the god-darnedest boondoggle joke you ever saw.”⁴³²

⁴²⁴ Elizabeth Wehr, “Signs of Thrift Seen in Largest-Ever Money Bill,” Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, November 1, 1986.

⁴²⁵ “On January 7 in NEPA,” The Times-Tribune, January 6, 2012.

⁴²⁶ Sean Holton, “After All the Railing, Steamtown May Get Real,” Orlando Sentinel, September 4, 1994.

⁴²⁷ Len Barcoucky, “All Aboard?,” Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, July 3, 1994.

⁴²⁸ David Singleton, “Steamtown Derailed,” The Times-Tribune, September 14, 2008.

⁴²⁹ Michael DeCourcy Hinds, “As ‘Steamtown’ Grows, So Does Parks Debate,” The New York Times, November 23, 1991, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/11/23/us/as-steamtown-grows-so-does-parks-debate.html>

⁴³⁰ Sean Holton, “After All the Railing, Steamtown May Get Real,” Orlando Sentinel, September 4, 1994.

⁴³¹ David Foster, “‘Park Barrel’ Politics Seen as Redefining 75-Year-Old National System Public Lands,” Los Angeles Times, October 13, 1991.

⁴³² Len Barcoucky, “All Aboard?” Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, July 3, 1994.

Federal funding for the Steamtown National Historic Park came to a final showdown in the House of Representatives when a Texas Congressmen attempted to eliminate Steamtown National Historic Site funding from the 1994 budget. The amendment to strip the funding was defeated, 229-192.⁴³³

This vote was not an endorsement of the park's inclusion in the National Park Service, but rather a concession that Rep. McDade's powerful position on the appropriations committee meant there could be retribution for voting against Steamtown USA. Many lawmakers took this to heart after Rep. McDade listed \$17.9 million worth of projects in Texas that he threatened to eliminate funding for during a heated debate.⁴³⁴ Voting to protect Steamtown was seventeen of the thirty Republicans in the Texas delegation. One of the Texas representatives quipped about the deal, "it was tit for tat."⁴³⁵

One observer noted following the vote, "It's [Steamtown National Historic Site] been a waste of taxpayers' money for years, and will be a waste of taxpayers' money for years to come." In total, more than \$150 million in federal funds have been spent on this project. Despite these resources Railfan & Railroad magazine has previously described Steamtown National Historic Site as "in bad shape and in need of attention" and the site's "success in returning old locomotives to service has been disappointing at best."⁴³⁶ A photographer highlighted the deteriorating condition of the park with a 2012 photo gallery exhibit titled "Elegant Corrosion," depicting rust, stains, and peeling of the train cars at Steamtown National Historic Site.



Twenty-six years after Congress bailed out Steamtown USA, taxpayers still spend \$52 for each of the 108,072 visitors that came to the park in 2012. In comparison, Mount Rushmore accommodated over 200 times as many visitors with 20 percent less money.⁴³⁷ On many days, the 56 full time employees at Steamtown National Historic Site outnumber the visitors.⁴³⁸

Most museums honor the heritage and remember the stories of our nation's past. But with Steamtown National Historic Site, the nearly \$6 million annual appropriation to the museum pays homage to the lasting consequences of political parochialism.

⁴³³ "Final Vote Results for Roll Call 332," Clerk House website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/1993/roll332.xml>.

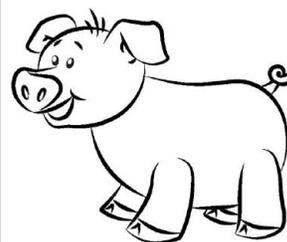
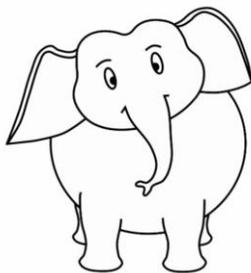
⁴³⁴ Pete Leffler, "Steamtown Survives Funding Assault in House," Morning Call, July 16, 1993.

⁴³⁵ Sandy Grady, "It's Still Just Business As Usual in Porkland, USA," The Salt Lake Tribune, July 19, 1993.

⁴³⁶ David Singleton, "Steamtown Derailed," The Times-Tribune, September 14, 2008.

⁴³⁷ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

⁴³⁸ David Singleton, "Steamtown Derailed," The Times-Tribune, September 14, 2008.



A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OFFICIAL REFERRED TO STEAMTOWN USA AS A “WHITE ELEPHANT” THAT “DIDN’T FIT OUR BASIC MISSIONS, TO PRESERVE HISTORIC SITES, ACTUAL PLACES THAT ARE SIGNIFICANT IN AMERICAN HISTORY.” A FORMER SMITHSONIAN TRANSPORTATION CURATOR CALLED IT “A THIRD-RATE COLLECTION IN A PLACE TO WHICH IT HAS NO RELEVANCE.” OTHER CRITICS HAVEN’T BEEN AS POLITE, LABELING IT A “DISGRACE,” A “BOONDOGGLE JOKE,” AND “A VIRTUAL PORK POSTER CHILD.”

KEWEENAW NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK – ANOTHER SLAB OF PORK

Located on Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, Keweenaw National Historical Park (KNHP) was created by Congress in 1992 to “preserve and interpret the story of the rise, domination and decline of the region’s copper mining industry.”⁴³⁹ Although copper mining in the area dates back to when Native America tribes extracted the copper to make tools thousands of years ago, a modern “copper boom” began here in the mid-1800s and lasted about 100 years.^{440 441} Then the copper industry collapsed. Companies left, and many residents moved, leaving decaying building and ghost towns.⁴⁴²

“Civic leaders desperate to salvage the local economy proposed a national park” to economically revitalize the area by drawing tourists and federal funds.⁴⁴³ “Skeptics scoffed,” but “Congress went along.”⁴⁴⁴

James Ridenour, who was director of the National Park Service at the time, said Congress “added another slab of pork to the parks” by establishing Keweenaw National Historical Park. Ridenour described Keweenaw as an “interesting place” with “a lot of charm,” but he “didn’t think we should be adding it to the NPS list.”⁴⁴⁵ Ridenour questioned “whether or not the area was sufficiently nationally significant to warrant park status” and noted it contained “acres of old mine tailings in the area” draining into

⁴³⁹ “Keweenaw National Historical Park; Keweenaw Heritage Sites,” National Park Service website, accessed July 1, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/kewe/parkmgmt/keweenaw-heritage-sites.htm> .

⁴⁴⁰ “Keweenaw National Historical Park Establishment Act Senate Report 102-480 to accompany S. 1664”, National Park Service website, October 8, 1992.

⁴⁴¹ “Keweenaw National Historical Park; History & Culture,” National Park Service website, accessed July 1, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/kewe/historyculture/index.htm> .

⁴⁴² Kath Usitalo, “Michigan Ghost Towns,” Great Lakes Gazette, October 31, 2012; <http://greatlakesgazette.wordpress.com/2012/10/31/michigan-ghost-towns/> .

⁴⁴³ “Preserving Michigan’s Copper Country,” Associated Press, August 8, 2007; http://www.nbcnews.com/id/20163366/ns/travel-destination_travel/t/preserving-michigans-copper-country/#.Udr50_mkqtY .

⁴⁴⁴ “Preserving Michigan’s Copper Country,” Associated Press, August 8, 2007; http://www.nbcnews.com/id/20163366/ns/travel-destination_travel/t/preserving-michigans-copper-country/#.Udr50_mkqtY .

⁴⁴⁵ James Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books, 1994. Page 82-83

a lake that the Park Service could be forced “to spend millions and millions of dollars to clean up.”⁴⁴⁶

“Expectations of the establishment of a national park on the Keweenaw Peninsula included the development of heritage tourism to assist in economic recovery,” according to the Department of Interior.⁴⁴⁷ In the first two decades since becoming part of the park service, “about \$42 million has come to the area because of the park,” according to the executive director of the KNHP Advisory Commission. But nearly half of that amount, \$18 million, paid for “operational expenses, including staff salaries and utilities.”⁴⁴⁸

Furthermore, it is difficult to determine whether making the area a unit of the National Park System achieved the goal of economic revitalization by drawing tourists, since the Park Service does not count the number of visitors to the park.⁴⁴⁹

Keweenaw NHS

Authorized: 1992

Visitors (2012): N/A

Funding (2012): \$1.488 million

Subsidy per Visitor: N/A

Congress “added another slab of pork to the parks”

-Former NPS Director Ridenour

What is certain is the area has moved from mining copper to mining federal largess.

From its creation up until the earmark ban in 2010, Keweenaw “had a well-established patron in the U.S. Senate who actively pursued funding earmarks for heritage projects.”⁴⁵⁰ In FY 2009, Michigan’s senators directed \$285,000 for the Quincy Smelting site located within Keweenaw.⁴⁵¹ In 2008, the senators earmarked \$496,000 to “rehabilitate the interior of the 1889 Union Building owned by Keweenaw National Historical Park.”⁴⁵² The congressional earmarks for Keweenaw were not limited to the Department of Interior’s budget either.

Several earmarks, for example, were included in the Senate-passed appropriations bill for the Department of Agriculture for fiscal year 2010.⁴⁵³

⁴⁴⁶ James Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books, 1994. Page 82-83

⁴⁴⁷ “Statement of Daniel N. Wenk, Deputy Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Subcommittee on National Parks of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources,” Department of the Interior website, September 27, 2007; http://www.doi.gov/ocl/hearings/110/s189_92707.cfm?renderforprint=1&.

⁴⁴⁸ Kurt Hauglie, “KNHP estimates economic impact at \$42M million,” The Daily Mining Gazette, December 17, 2010; <http://www.mininggazette.com/page/content.detail/id/518143/KNHP-estimates-economic-impact-at--42M-million.html?nav=5006>.

⁴⁴⁹ National Park Service statistics for Fiscal Years ’11 and ’12

⁴⁵⁰ Bode J. Morin, “The Legacy of American Copper Smelting: Industrial Heritage versus Environmental Policy,” University of Tennessee Press, April 30, 2013, page 191.

⁴⁵¹ Kurt Hauglie, “Quincy smelter benefits from federal earmarks,” The Daily Mining Gazette, March 12, 2009; <http://www.mininggazette.com/page/content.detail/id/504253.html?nav=5006>.

⁴⁵² “2008 Earmarks,” White House Office of Management and Budget website, accessed July 2, 2013; http://earmarks.omb.gov/earmarks-public/2008-earmarks/earmark_366418.html.

⁴⁵³ “Stabenow, Levin: Senate Approves More Than \$45 Million in Critical Funding for Michigan,” website of Senator Carl Levin, August 4, 2009; <http://www.levin.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/stabenow-levin-senate-approves-more-than-45-million-in-critical-funding-for-michigan/?section=alltypes>.

In addition, a provision tucked into a 2009 omnibus lands bill authorized increased spending for the park and its advisory commission, decreased the local match required to be paid for projects in the park, eliminated the limitation on the federal contribution to the commission, and repealed the prohibition against acquisition of property contaminated with hazardous substances.⁴⁵⁴ The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) cautioned that acquiring such property could increase costs for the National Park Service. In its analysis of the bill, CBO stated “an additional \$26 million would be spent after 2013 for park development, including possible environmental cleanup and restoration of contaminated lands if any are acquired as a result of this legislation.”⁴⁵⁵ CBO also projected that “in addition, the federal government could be liable for injuries caused by contamination on lands acquired as a result of this bill.”⁴⁵⁶

Despite its lavish Congressional support, Keweenaw does not function as or resemble a national park. “Unlike the typical national park, Keweenaw’s boundaries are a bit confusing.”⁴⁵⁷ This is because “most visitor services for Keweenaw National Historical Park, such as guided tours or museums, are provided by the park’s partners known as Keweenaw Heritage Sites. These sites are not owned or operated by the National Park Service.”⁴⁵⁸



THE KEWEENAW REGION HAS MOVED FROM MINING COPPER TO MINING FEDERAL LARGESS.

⁴⁵⁴ Section 7101 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (H.R. 146, related bill S. 22 and S. 135), became Public Law 111-11 on March 30, 2009.

⁴⁵⁵“Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate: S. 189, A bill to decrease the matching funds requirement and authorize additional appropriations for the Keweenaw National Historical Park in the state of Michigan,” Congressional Budget Office, February 29, 2008; <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/90xx/doc9038/s189senr.pdf> .

⁴⁵⁶“Congressional Budget Office Cost Estimate: S. 189, A bill to decrease the matching funds requirement and authorize additional appropriations for the Keweenaw National Historical Park in the state of Michigan,” Congressional Budget Office, February 29, 2008; <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/ftpdocs/90xx/doc9038/s189senr.pdf> .

⁴⁵⁷ “Preserving Michigan’s copper country,” Associated Press, August 8, 2007; http://www.nbcnews.com/id/20163366/ns/travel-destination_travel/t/preserving-michigans-copper-country/#.Udr50_mkqTY .

⁴⁵⁸ “Keweenaw National Historical Park; Plan Your Visit,” National Park Service website, accessed July 8, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/kewe/planyourvisit/index.htm> .

THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO NATIONAL MEMORIAL- FEW VISITORS TO UNKNOWN POLISH WAR HERO FLOP HOUSE

Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial pays tribute to a Polish revolutionary hero who assisted American leaders during the U.S. war for independence. Do not feel ashamed if you have never heard of Mr. Kosciuszko, as even the National Park Service readily admits that most visitors do not “have prior knowledge of Kosciuszko.”⁴⁵⁹ The Philadelphia row house is the smallest and one of the least visited of all 401 park units.

Notwithstanding Kosciuszko’s relative obscurity in American history, the actual row house was not even significant to Kosciuszko’s life. Upon returning to the United States after leading a Polish revolution against the Russians, he instructed his secretary to find him a place “as small, as remote and as cheap” as possible.⁴⁶⁰ Kosciuszko used the Philadelphia home as temporary residence for only nine months, where he recovered from wounds suffered while leading a Polish uprising against the Russians and petitioned Congress for payment for his service during the American Revolution.⁴⁶¹

It is not always clear how certain park projects get green lighted. In this case, the answer lies with an influential Polish-American businessman lobbying Congress to overrule the National Park Service. Edward J. Pizek, founder of the frozen seafood company Mrs. Paul’s Kitchen, bought the Philadelphia row house with aims of donating it to the National Park Service.⁴⁶² However, when Mr. Pizek offered the row house, a Park Service advisory committee turned him down, reasoning that the row house was not Kosciuszko’s home and nobody even knew in which room he had stayed.⁴⁶³ Not to be deterred, Mr. Pizek opted to convince Congress to force the National Park Service to accept it anyways. On October 21st, 1972 Congress acquiesced to Mr. Pizek’s request, passing a bill to add the house to the National Park System and setting aside \$600,000 to rehabilitate the dilapidated structure.

Thaddeus Kosciuszko NM

Established: 1972
Visitors (2012): 2,233
Funding (2012):
\$162,000
Subsidy per visitor:
\$72.50

“Averaging a mere six visitors a day, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial gets more usage as a personal study for the lone Park Ranger that works the site than it does as a shrine to American history.”

⁴⁵⁹ “Long Range Interpretive Plan: Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial,” National Park Service, December 2003; <http://www.nps.gov/thko/parkmgmt/planning.htm>.

⁴⁶⁰ Robert Smith, “A Brief History: The Smallest National Park Site,” National Public Radio, June 30, 2008; <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92035186>.

⁴⁶¹ “Frequently Asked Question,” National Park Service website, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/thko/faqs.htm>.

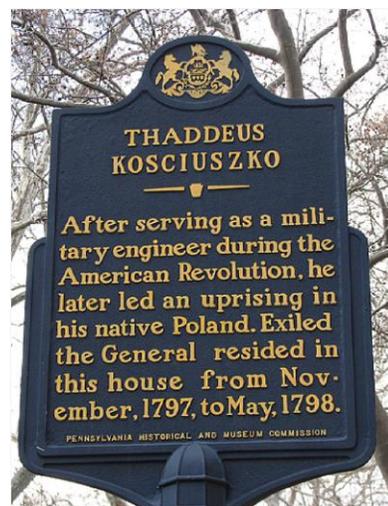
⁴⁶² Jesse McKinley, “Commemorating Those Lost Through Time,” The New York Times, August 27, 2011; <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/28/us/28memorial.html?pagewanted=all&r=2&>.

⁴⁶³ Andy Wallace, “Fishcake King, friend to Pope, dies Edward J. Pizek, Mrs. Paul’s founder, ‘touched a lot of people,’” The Inquirer, March 28, 2004; http://articles.philly.com/2004-03-28/news/25385548_1_concession-candy-store-poland/3.

The initial decision by the NPS advisory board to reject inclusion of the row house appears to have been the appropriate choice. Averaging only six visitors a day, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial gets more use as a personal study for the lone Park Ranger that works the site than it does as a shrine to American history. One ranger working the site a few years ago promised that they get at least one visitor per day while admitting that it's a pretty "quiet gig for a ranger."⁴⁶⁴ Another Ranger admitted "it can be somewhat boring" after spending most of his shift reading a book about President Franklin D. Roosevelt while waiting for visitors to walk in.⁴⁶⁵

As the smallest unit in the national park system, the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial may have the shortest hours as well. **Open only 9 hours per week, this Philadelphia park unit costs an astounding \$352 per hour to operate.**⁴⁶⁶

While the merits of this memorial as a national park unit are questionable, there is no doubt the \$73 in federal funding for every person that walks into the tiny row house is worthy of increased taxpayer scrutiny.⁴⁶⁷



THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO, WHO WAS BORN IN POLAND AND VOLUNTEERED IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, RESIDED IN THIS HOUSE FOR ONLY NINE MONTHS. THE SITE IS OPEN A MERE 9 HOURS A WEEK AND WELCOMES JUST SIX VISITORS A DAY.

⁴⁶⁴ Robert Smith, "A Brief History: National Park Site," National Public Radio, June 30, 2008; <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=92035186> .

⁴⁶⁵ Jesse McKinley, "Commemorating Those Lost Through Time," The New York Times, August 27, 2011; <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/28/us/28memorial.html?pagewanted=2& r=1&sq=national%20parks&st=cse&scp=2> .

⁴⁶⁶ "Thaddeus Kosciuszko: Operating Hours," National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/thko/planyourvisit/hours.htm> .

⁴⁶⁷ "Budget Justification and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2013," National Park Service; http://home.nps.gov/applications/budget2/FY13_NPS_Greenbook.pdf .

GRANT-KOHR'S NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE - MONTANA RANCH HEIR RETIRES ON TAXPAYER DIME

A “living history” museum intended to capture the history of cattle ranching in the West is costing taxpayers an average of \$85 per visitor.

The Grant-Kohrs Ranch in Montana was once one of the largest and most profitable cattle operations in the United States. However, the current government operators cannot replicate the previous financial successes of the ranch. According to the park’s business plan, because “government wage grades greatly exceed labor costs of an average ranch, it is impossible for Grant-Kohrs Ranch ranching operation to break-even.”⁴⁶⁸

Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS

Established: 1972
Visitors (2012): 17,489
Funding (2012):
\$1,489,000
Subsidy per visitor:
\$85.10

“Really, that's kind of what saved my bacon is when I made that sale . . . otherwise, I think I'd be flat broke now, maybe worse than flat.”

After graduating from the University of Virginia, Conrad Kohrs Warren, grandson of part of the namesake of the National Historic Site, assumed management of the Montana ranch in 1932. By 1940, Conrad Warren decided to purchase the property from the operating company, Conrad Kohrs Company, becoming the final private owner of the ranch. After a decade of running the ranch with limited profitability, Warren eventually had to reconsider the sustainability of the operation.

As it so happened, the National Park Service was in the midst of an initiative to introduce unmet themes in the system, including studying potential sites to represent the role of the cattle industry in western expansion. Both the Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota and

the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis interpreted the cattle theme, but the NPS wanted a site with a primary focus on cattle ranching. After studying 26 sites in 1959, Grant-Kohrs Ranch, along with three other ranches, was designated as a National Historic Landmark.⁴⁶⁹

Getting the historic designation inspired Conrad Warren and his wife to sell the ranch to the National Park Service in order to fill the void left without an interested successor to the family business. In 1966, Warren suggested that the idea served the noble intent of saving the family’s legacy by preserving the ranch as part of the National Park System.

However, a historian assigned to investigate the potential inclusion of the site in the National Park Service soon discovered, despite his “expression of lofty motives for

⁴⁶⁸ “Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Business Plan,” National Park Service, 2006; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/parkmgmt/upload/Business%20Plan.pdf>.

⁴⁶⁹ A National Historic Landmark designation is a title that does not include government acquisition and official status in the National Park System, but a more informal role with technical assistance on preservation.

parting with the ranch, he was willing, even anxious, to sell.”⁴⁷⁰ Many in the local community suspected that Warren had less than pure motives in selling the ranch to the federal government. In a letter to the National Park Service, Warren admitted that he did not have the funds to preserve the ranch and noted that his retirement was quickly approaching.⁴⁷¹ Reflecting on the eventual sale of part of the ranch, Warren stated, “Really, that's kind of what saved my bacon is when I made that sale . . . otherwise, I think I'd be flat broke now, maybe worse than flat.”⁴⁷²

When all was said and done, Warren was nicely compensated \$250,000 in 1970 (nearly \$1.5 million in 2012 dollars) for 130 acres and 1,110 acres in easements to the National Park Foundation, the holder of the lands until Congress officially authorized the park's purchase.⁴⁷³ Warren maintained part of the ranch for continued operations.

The local community and the Montana Congressional delegation eventually rallied around the idea of Grant-Kohrs Ranch becoming a part of the National Park Service. With ambitious forecasts of 220,000 to 240,000 annual visitors to the ranch, the local Chamber of Commerce and the Deer Lodge residents reckoned that a National Park unit was going to provide an economic boom for the community. Recounting these events, a former park employee stated, “They were all going to get rich off of it.... They thought it was going to be another Yellowstone.”⁴⁷⁴

With the help of the Montana delegation, the bill establishing the park eased through Congress and President Nixon signed it into law on August 25, 1972.

The importance of the park came into question six years later during a Congressional hearing, when neither the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee nor the National Park Service Director could identify in which state Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site was located.⁴⁷⁵

Four decades later, the site's national significance is still unclear. It attracts less than 20,000 visitors per year,⁴⁷⁶ far from the estimate of 240,000 annual visitors that was discussed during the park's consideration. The Ranch has a total of ninety-three cattle,⁴⁷⁷ far outnumbering the 48 visitors to the park on an average day. A 2001

⁴⁷⁰ Douglas C. McChristian, “Ranchers to Rangers: An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site,” National Park Service, July 1997; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/parkmgmt/upload/adhi1.pdf>.

⁴⁷¹ Douglas C. McChristian, “Ranchers to Rangers: An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site,” National Park Service, July 1997; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/parkmgmt/upload/adhi1.pdf>.

⁴⁷² Douglas C. McChristian, “Ranchers to Rangers: An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site,” National Park Service, July 1997; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/parkmgmt/upload/adhi1.pdf>.

⁴⁷³ Douglas C. McChristian, “Ranchers to Rangers: An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site,” National Park Service, July 1997; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/parkmgmt/upload/adhi1.pdf>.

⁴⁷⁴ Douglas C. McChristian, “Ranchers to Rangers: An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site,” National Park Service, July 1997; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/parkmgmt/upload/adhi1.pdf>.

⁴⁷⁵ Steinhart, Peter. Our Cornered National Parks. Boston Globe. September 28, 1980, Pg H10. Accessed on December 4th, 2012.

⁴⁷⁶ This number is the average number of visitors over the last five years.

⁴⁷⁷ “Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site: Cattle,” National Park Service website, accessed July 25, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/naturescience/cattle.htm>.

Montana tourism survey found that two-thirds of the visitors to Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site did not have any prior knowledge of the park. Most people discovered the park by seeing a sign on I-90, the main thoroughfare between Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks.⁴⁷⁸

The Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site is not the only historic ranch within the National Park System. There is at least one historic ranch within Bighorn Canyon National Recreational Reserve,⁴⁷⁹ Point Reyes National Seashore,⁴⁸⁰ Lyndon B Johnson National Historic Site,⁴⁸¹ Grand Teton National Park, Wind Cave National Park,⁴⁸² Guadalupe Mountains National Park,⁴⁸³ Joshua Tree National Park⁴⁸⁴ and Chiricahua National Monument.⁴⁸⁵ In total, there are more than 50 “historic ranches” in the United States.⁴⁸⁶



THE GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH HAS A TOTAL OF 93 CATTLE, FAR OUTNUMBERING THE 48 VISITORS THAT VISIT THE PARK ON AN AVERAGE DAY.

⁴⁷⁸ “Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Business Plan,” National Park Service, 2006; <http://www.nps.gov/grko/parkmgmt/upload/Business%20Plan.pdf> .

⁴⁷⁹ “Bighorn Canyon: Historic Ranches,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/bica/historyculture/historic-ranches.htm> .

⁴⁸⁰ “Ranching History at Point Reyes,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/pore/historyculture/people_ranching.htm .

⁴⁸¹ “Visiting the LBJ Ranch,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/lyjo/planyourvisit/visitlbjranch.htm> .

⁴⁸² “Addition of Historic Ranch to Wind Cave National Park,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/wica/parknews/addition-of-historic-ranch-to-wind-cave-national-park.htm> .

⁴⁸³ “Guadalupe Mountains: Frijole Ranch- Historic Overview,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/gumo/historyculture/frijolehistory.htm> .

⁴⁸⁴ “Joshua Tree: Keys Ranch Guided Walking Tour,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/jotr/planyourvisit/ranchtour.htm> .

⁴⁸⁵ “Chiricahua: Faraway Ranch Historic District,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/chir/photosmultimedia/Faraway-Ranch-Historic-District.htm> .

⁴⁸⁶ “Historic Site Ranches,” Undaunted Stewardship website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.undauntedstewardship.montana.edu/historicsiteranches.htm> .

EUGENE O'NEILL NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE- MOVIE STARS SUCCESSFULLY LOBBY FOR SITE THAT NOW HAS AS MANY EMPLOYEES AS DAILY VISITORS

As reclusive as its namesake, the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site has found the same isolation that its one-time owner relished. Honoring American playwright Eugene O'Neill, this site averaged less than 10 visitors per day to the California mansion and grounds.⁴⁸⁷ With nine employees, the National Park Service often has more staff working the grounds than daily visitors. The site is located among the 7.5 million individuals living in the San Francisco Bay Area.⁴⁸⁸ At the current visitation rate, it would take about 2,054 years before everybody in the heavily populated area would visit the nearby national park site.

Congress created the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site after a six-year lobbying effort by movie stars and California lawmakers. When the private owner of the estate proposed to sell the property, the Eugene O'Neill Foundation was formed to include the estate as property in the National Park System. The Eugene O'Neill Foundation garnered support for the designation from Charlie Chaplin, Sir Laurence Olivier, and Ingrid Bergman, among others from the theatrical community.⁴⁸⁹ Despite National Park Service opposition to the bill, who called for local and private preservation efforts instead, Congress sided with the movie stars and passed a bill in 1976 to establish the unit.⁴⁹⁰

Identified as "America's most famous unknown theatrical landmark," this federal park is only accessible for visitors by advanced reservations of a NPS shuttle van from the adjacent town of Danville.⁴⁹¹ With an annual budget of \$687,000, American taxpayers spent about \$244 for every visitor that boarded the "free" shuttle to the site.⁴⁹²

Eugene O'Neill NHS
Authorized: 1976
Visitors (2012): 2,815
Funding (2012):
\$687,000
Subsidy per Visitor:
\$244.00

At the current visitation rate, it would take more than **two millennia** before everybody in the San Francisco Bay Area visited this site that passed Congress at the request of movie stars.

It seems the legacy of this Nobel Prize winning playwright will be carried on through the staging of his plays and readings of his scripts much more so than through the sparsely visited home where he lived for seven years.

⁴⁸⁷ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁴⁸⁸ "Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas," Census.gov website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.census.gov/popest/data/metro/totals/2011/index.html>.

⁴⁸⁹ Alan Cranston, "A Living Monument To Eugene O'Neill," New York Times, October 24, 1976.

⁴⁹⁰ Alan Cranston, "A Living Monument To Eugene O'Neill," New York Times, October 24, 1976.

⁴⁹¹ "Eugene O'Neill: Fees and Reservations," National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/euon/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>.

⁴⁹² "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

Taxpayers should not have to pay nearly \$700,000 per year for a few people to visit the house Eugene O’Neill lived in for a short stint and observe his tuxedo or monogrammed handkerchief’s along with his 3rd wife’s “Asian inspired robes” or summer dress.⁴⁹³



EUGENE O’NEILL LIVED IN OVER 35 DIFFERENT PLACES. SOME CREDIT THE “ISOLATION OF TAO HOUSE, BOTH PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL,” FOR ALLOWING HIM TO CREATE MANY OF HIS BEST WORKS. THE HOUSE, NOW A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, REMAINS ISOLATED WITH FEWER THAN TEN GUESTS A DAY.⁴⁹⁴

⁴⁹³ “Newly Discovered Play By O’Neill, Exorcism, Featured with Diff’rent in Spring Playwright’s Theatre Offerings,” Eugene O’Neill website, Spring 2012; <http://www.eugeneoneill.org/newsletters/documents/2012%20EONF%20Newsletter%20-%20Spring%20Final.pdf> .

⁴⁹⁴ “Eugene O’Neill National Historic Site: Frequently Asked Questions,” National Park Service website, accessed July 25, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/euon/faqs.htm> .

PARKS THAT ARE INACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC

Our National Park units are often referred to as American treasures. In some cases, these treasures remain buried, kept hidden away from the public or sometimes not open at all. Of course it is to be expected that many of the most majestic landscapes in the United States will be located far away from major thoroughfares. Yet, miles of dirt roads, expensive plane and ferry rides, and even “no trespassing signs” would seem to be surprise experiences when traveling to a National Park. From the shuttered Carter G. Woodson Home in Washington DC to the hidden Yucca House in Colorado, the American people may be shocked to learn that some of the taxpayer funded parks are difficult, if not impossible to access.

YUCCA HOUSE- PLEASE CLOSE THE GATE ON YOUR WAY OUT

With “no trespassing” signs (two⁴⁹⁵) outnumbering signs directing travelers to the entrance of Yucca House National Monument (zero⁴⁹⁶), visitors are likely to confuse their trip to this Colorado monument with breaking and entering. Yucca House National Monument is so desolate that the National Park Service does not recommend it for casual visitors, and traveling to this unit requires a 2.2-mile trek down dirt and gravel roads that become impassable during inclement weather.^{497 498} Guests are asked to respect the local property owners by closing the livestock gates behind them as they make their way to the lonely gate representing the entrance to the national monument. Without any facilities or permanent staff, the only thing waiting for visitors upon arrival is a box of brochures next to the stile to pass through the fence.

Yucca House NM

Established: 1919

Visitors (2012): unknown

Funding (2012): \$104,000

“Currently, there are no signs directing you to Yucca House. The monument is surrounded by private land. Once you leave the main highway, the road to Yucca House becomes gravel or dirt, which may be impassible in wet weather. **You will also need to pass through livestock gates and close them behind you.**”

-NPS Website

⁴⁹⁵ “Yucca House National Monument,” Grand Junction Hikes website, accessed July 17, 2013;

<http://www.gjhikes.com/2012/08/yucca-house-national-monument.html> .

⁴⁹⁶ “Directions,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/yuho/planyourvisit/directions.htm> .

⁴⁹⁷ “Plan Your Visit,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/yuho/planyourvisit/index.htm> .

⁴⁹⁸ “Directions,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/yuho/planyourvisit/directions.htm> .

The information contained within the brochure is vital to discern what landmarks to see in this National Monument, “two areas with large mounds of rubble covered with vegetation”⁴⁹⁹ representing an unexcavated Ancestral Puebloan surface site. Guests will have to imagine what the 13th century pueblo would have looked like because the site will reportedly remain buried until an indeterminate time in the future. Guests may also need to use their imagination when trying to determine what the \$104,000 in annual federal funding is used for on a site without any facilities, staff, or even paved roads.⁵⁰⁰



BEFORE REACHING THE DESOLATE AND DRAB ENTRANCE TO THE YUCCA HOUSE NATIONAL MONUMENT, VISITORS WILL FIRST PASS TWO “NO TRESPASSING” SIGNS.

FORT BOWIE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE – LONG HIKE TO SPARSLEY VISITED DESTINATION

One enthusiast of Arizona’s Fort Bowie National Historic Site explains that it “takes some effort” to get to.⁵⁰¹ What an understatement. Interested visitors first have to drive 20 miles from the small town of Wilcox, Arizona,⁵⁰² and then must traverse eight miles of unpaved roads to the trailhead; from there, one is required to hike another 1.5 miles to the visitor center to finally arrive at the Fort Bowie National Historic Site.⁵⁰³

This may explain why the former 19th century US Army outpost receives an average of less than 25 people per day.⁵⁰⁴

In its early years, Fort Bowie was a “crude, rag-tag” fort that was built in three weeks. In 1863, one officer lamented that the Fort had been built without “system, regard to health, defense or convenience.” A few years later, the fort was enhanced substantially

⁴⁹⁹ “Frequently Asked Questions,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/yuho/faqs.htm>

⁵⁰⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵⁰¹ Website of the Taylor-Lenz Family – Adventures of the Hikemasters, “Adventures to Fort Bowie National Historic Site,” February 24, 2010, <http://www.taylorlenz.com/2010/02/visit-to-fort-bowie-national-historic.html>, accessed July 25, 2013.

⁵⁰² Website of the Taylor-Lenz Family – Adventures of the Hikemasters, “Adventures to Fort Bowie National Historic Site,” February 24, 2010, <http://www.taylorlenz.com/2010/02/visit-to-fort-bowie-national-historic.html>, July 25, 2013.

⁵⁰³ “Directions,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/fobo/planyourvisit/directions.htm>

⁵⁰⁴ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

with the additions of a “barracks of adobe, officers [sic] quarters, corrals, storerooms, a post trader’s store and a hospital [that] were built around the four sides of a parade ground.” Additionally, “the new fort even had a post office, a stop on the mail run from El Paso to Tucson.” In 1964, “ruins of the old post, diminished by time, weather and vandals, were declared a National Historic Site,”⁵⁰⁵ in commemoration of the conflict between the Apaches and the U.S. Military “that culminated in the surrender of Geronimo in 1886.”⁵⁰⁶

As one of the least visited sites in the Park System, Fort Bowie National Historic Site has recorded a total visitation over the last four decades that would still only rank it as the sixth most visited National Park unit in Arizona in 2012.

Fort Bowie NHS
 Authorized: 1964
 Visitors (2012): 7,966
 Funding (2012): 452,511
 Subsidy per Visitor: 31.17

Fort Bowie NHS has recorded a total visitation over the last four decades that would still only rank it as the sixth most visited National Park unit in Arizona in 2012.

Arizona National Park Units	Visitation 2012
Grand Canyon NP	4,358,215
Canyon de Chelly NM	829,043
Petrified Forest NP	651,758
Saguaro NP	637,171
Montezuma Castle NM	577,781
Fort Bowie NHS (1969-2012)	317,992
Wupatki NM	201,365
Sunset Crater Volcano NM	177,793
Organ Pipe Cactus NM	162,048
Coronado NMEM	111,558
Walnut Canyon NM	110,748
Tuzigoot NM	97,388
Hubbell Trading Post NHS	77,709
Casa Grande Ruins NM	69,539
Navajo NM	65,729
Pipe Spring NM	56,838
Tonto NM	53,039
Chiricahua NM	47,665
Tumacacori NHP	33,529
Fort Bowie NHS (2012)	7,966
Hohokam Pima NM	0

WHILE ARIZONA DRAWS MILLIONS EVERY YEAR TO VIEW THE GRAND CANYON, FORT BOWIE ONLY DRAWS A FRACTION OF THOSE.

⁵⁰⁵ James Abarr, “Fort Bowie – Guardian of the Apache Pass,” February 1, 1998, Albuquerque Journal, C1

⁵⁰⁶ Tony Davis, “Panel denies sale proposal that includes Fort Bowie site,” September 27, 2005, Arizona Daily Star, B2.



THERE IS A 1 ½ MILE HIKE FROM THE PARKING LOT TO THE VISITORS' CENTER AT FORT BOWIE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN ARIZONA.

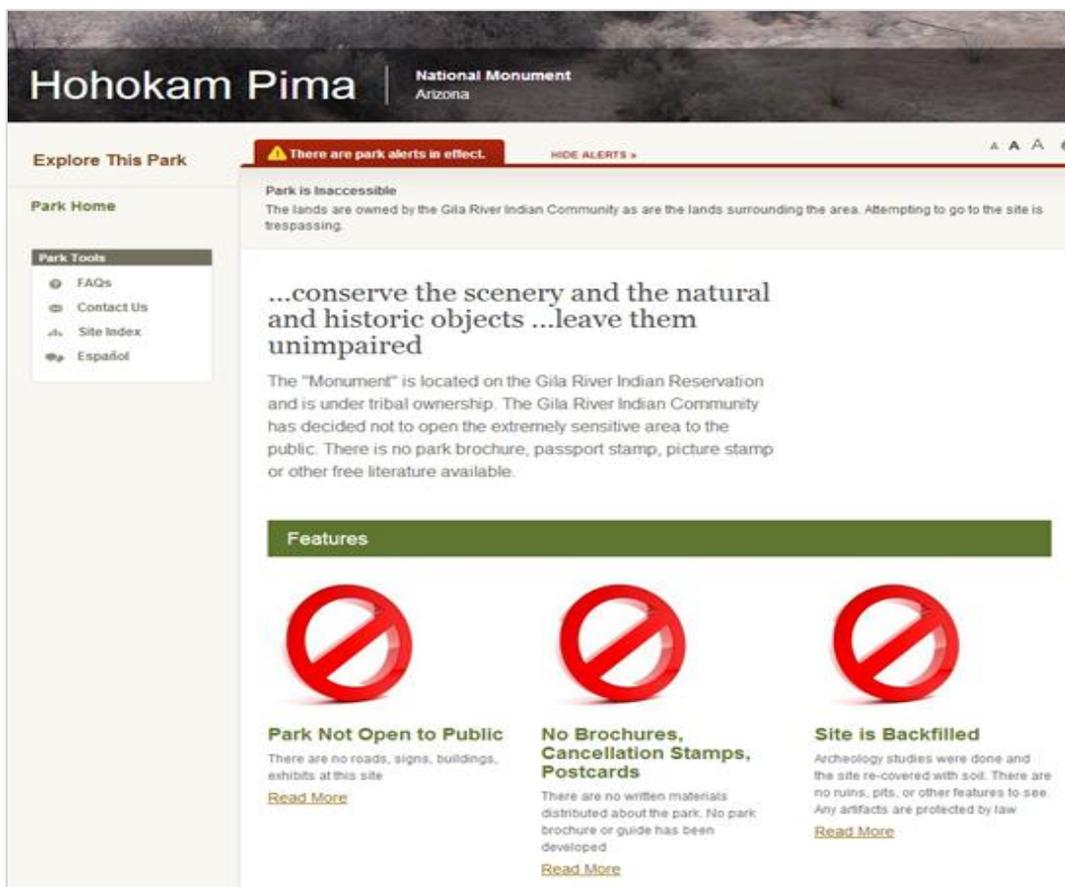
HOHOKAM PIMA NATIONAL MONUMENT- VISITING THIS PARK COULD GET YOU CHARGED WITH TRESPASSING

Attempting to visit one of the National Park Service locations in Arizona could get you charged with trespassing.⁵⁰⁷ Hohokam Pima lies on the Gila River Indian Reservation, and the resident Pima Indians strictly forbid access to the site. In fact, this National Monument has never been accessible to the public since Congress approved it four decades ago.⁵⁰⁸ Don't bet on vacationing here with the family anytime soon, either. It only takes one visit to the Hohokam Pima National Monument webpage to find that the park will not be accessible to the public for the foreseeable future.⁵⁰⁹

⁵⁰⁷ "Hohokam Pima National Monument: Park Home," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/pima/index.htm>

⁵⁰⁸ Eric Peterson, "Hohokam Pima National Monument," Website of The Learning Channel, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/family/hohokam-pima-national-monument.htm>

⁵⁰⁹ "Hohokam Pima National Monument: Park Home," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/pima/index.htm>



“ATTEMPTING TO GO THE SITE IS TRESPASSING,” WARNS THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WEBSITE REGARDING THE HOHOKAM PIMA NATIONAL MONUMENT. IT ALSO NOTES “THERE ARE NO ROADS, SIGNS, BUILDINGS, EXHIBITS AT THE SITE” AND “THERE ARE NO WRITTEN MATERIALS DISTRIBUTED ABOUT THE PARK.”⁵¹⁰

Hohokam Pima NM
 Authorized: 1972
 Visitors (2012): 0
 Funding (2012): N/A

“Any visitors to the area will be considered trespassers”
 -National Park Service

The site’s webpage provides little detail about what is so important about this monument that taxpayers are forbidden from visiting.⁵¹¹ However, other sources relate that within Hohokam Pima National Monument lies the Snaketown archeological site, a remnant of the vanished Hohokam civilization that flourished in the area from about 300 B.C. to 1500 A.D.⁵¹² The 300-acre site contains pit houses, irrigation canals, and even a ball court. It was abandoned most likely between 1100 and 1200 A.D. and excavated in the 1930s and 60s.⁵¹³

⁵¹⁰ “Hohokam Pima National Monument: Park Home,” Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/pima/index.htm>.

⁵¹¹ Eric Peterson, “Hohokam Pima National Monument,” Website of The Learning Channel, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/family/hohokam-pima-national-monument.htm>.

⁵¹² Eric Peterson, “Hohokam Pima National Monument,” Website of The Learning Channel, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/family/hohokam-pima-national-monument.htm>.

⁵¹³ Eric Peterson, “Hohokam Pima National Monument,” Website of The Learning Channel, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/family/hohokam-pima-national-monument.htm>.

Seeing the park is even more difficult. Snaketown is six feet under, buried under layers of dirt after the completion of the last archaeological dig in the 1960s. This was reportedly done to protect the ruins from the harsh weather of the Arizona desert.⁵¹⁴ Some old black-and-white photographs exist of the Snaketown excavations, but no one has seen the site for decades.

CARTER G. WOODSON HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE: NATIONAL PARK SITE
JUST BLOCKS FROM CONGRESS CLOSED TO PUBLIC AND ON THE VERGE OF
COLLAPSE

Located in Northwest Washington DC, the Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site was authorized by Congress in 2003 to honor the home of the founder of Black History Month. Despite spending \$2.1 million in federal tax dollars for the purchase of the site and its adjoining units, it has yet to be visited since its formal establishment in the National Park System in 2006.⁵¹⁵ Blazoned with a “no trespassing” sign, the site has remained closed ever since its passage. Despite the Carter G. Woodson National Historic Site receiving over \$50,000 per year in funding⁵¹⁶, this nascent National Park unit remains dormant, waiting to be renovated.

Carter G. Woodson NHS

Established: 2006

Visitors (2012): 0

Funding (2012):

\$52,000

“The flooring is so
tenuous ... there should
not be more than 5
people in the house at
any one time”

The site remains in disrepair with little hope for the foreseeable future. On December 19, 2012, DC Congressional Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton relayed a letter to Congress from the National Park Service stating that it "cannot accurately estimate the timeline or total cost for the rehabilitation of the Woodson Home at this point."⁵¹⁷ Norton criticized the delay, unsurprisingly, seeing as it was she who authored the bill in 2003 that created this park unit in the first place.

One can certainly empathize with Norton’s outrage. However, it should not come as much of a surprise that the park is experiencing such troubles, for the National Park Service itself in its 2001 Special Resource Study of the site indicated that restoration would likely face delays:

In today’s fiscal climate, it could be very difficult to fund the new site at an adequate level to provide a high quality visitor experience as envisioned.

In the short term, funding levels would fall below desired needs. As a new

⁵¹⁴ Eric Peterson, “Hohokam Pima National Monument,” Website of The Learning Channel, accessed July 23, 2013;

<http://tlc.howstuffworks.com/family/hohokam-pima-national-monument.htm>.

⁵¹⁵ Michael E Ruane, “National Park Service Plans to Repair Carter G. Woodson House,” The Washington Post, April 30, 2013;

http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-04-30/local/38928025_1_national-park-service-carter-g-black-history-month.

⁵¹⁶ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2013,” National Park Service, 2013;

http://www.doi.gov/budget/appropriations/2013/upload/FY2013_NPS_Greenbook.pdf.

⁵¹⁷ “Fed Up with Delay, Norton Reads Letter to President Obama on Snail’s Pace of NPS Work on Carter G. Woodson Historic Site,” Congressional Documents and Publications, December 19, 2012.

addition to the National Park System, it would compete with other park sites for funding and attention. As there is already a backlog in building maintenance throughout the Service, the historic structure might not receive the attention it needs in a timely manner.⁵¹⁸

The Park Service did not try to bury this opinion within its Special Resource Study. In June 2003, the Park Service's Assistant Director for Recreation and Conservation, D. Thomas Ross, told the Senate that it should postpone establishment of the historic site because the agency had a significant maintenance backlog and lacked funds to reconstruct the Woodson house.⁵¹⁹

In retrospect, "resurrect" would probably have been a more fitting word than "reconstruct" for the Herculean labor that lay before the Park Service. "Drug addicts and prostitutes lived in the home before we got it," mused Park Service Manager Joy Kinard. "It was a den of iniquity."⁵²⁰ "The flooring is so tenuous that the architect hired by the association said there should not be more than five people in the house at any one time," reported Sylvia Cyrus-Albritton of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, a nonprofit founded by Woodson.⁵²¹ According to the Washington Post:

... a windowpane is broken, allowing tall passers-by to peer directly into what Woodson used as office space. The rear yard, which backs up to an alley, is overgrown with weeds. A chain-link fence, topped with barbed wire, surrounds the rear yard, and a jumble of dangling telephone wires is visible behind it. The roof has leaked, causing water damage inside the house.⁵²²

The 2001 Park Service study made no explicit mention of any structural problems, but it declared the overall structure as being in "fair condition."⁵²³ The only specific detail it mentions about the house is that "the stairs are in good condition."⁵²⁴ By 2013, not even the stairs matched that description, as their paint is now peeling off. In 2011, Hurricane Irene and the Washington-area earthquake both took a toll on the house. As of April

⁵¹⁸ "Draft Special Resource Study: Carter G. Woodson Home," National Park Service, January 2001;

http://www.nps.gov/ncro/woodson/pdf/Carter_G_Woodson_txt.pdf.

⁵¹⁹ Chan, Sewell, "Black Pioneer's NW Home Slated to Become Museum; Historic Site Bill Fulfills Dream for Run-Down Carter Woodson House," The Washington Post, December 1, 2003.

⁵²⁰ Michael E Ruane, "National Park Service Plans to Repair Carter G. Woodson House," The Washington Post, April 30, 2013; http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-04-30/local/38928025_1_national-park-service-carter-g-black-history-month.

⁵²¹ "FATHER OF BLACK HISTORY' HOUSE NAMED NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE FDCH," Federal Department and Agency Documents REGULATORY INTELLIGENCE DATA, February 3, 2004.

⁵²² "FATHER OF BLACK HISTORY' HOUSE NAMED NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE FDCH," Federal Department and Agency Documents REGULATORY INTELLIGENCE DATA, February 3, 2004.

⁵²³ "Appendices," National Park Service, October 24, 2000;

http://www.nps.gov/ncro/woodson/pdf/Carter_G_Woodson_appendix.pdf.

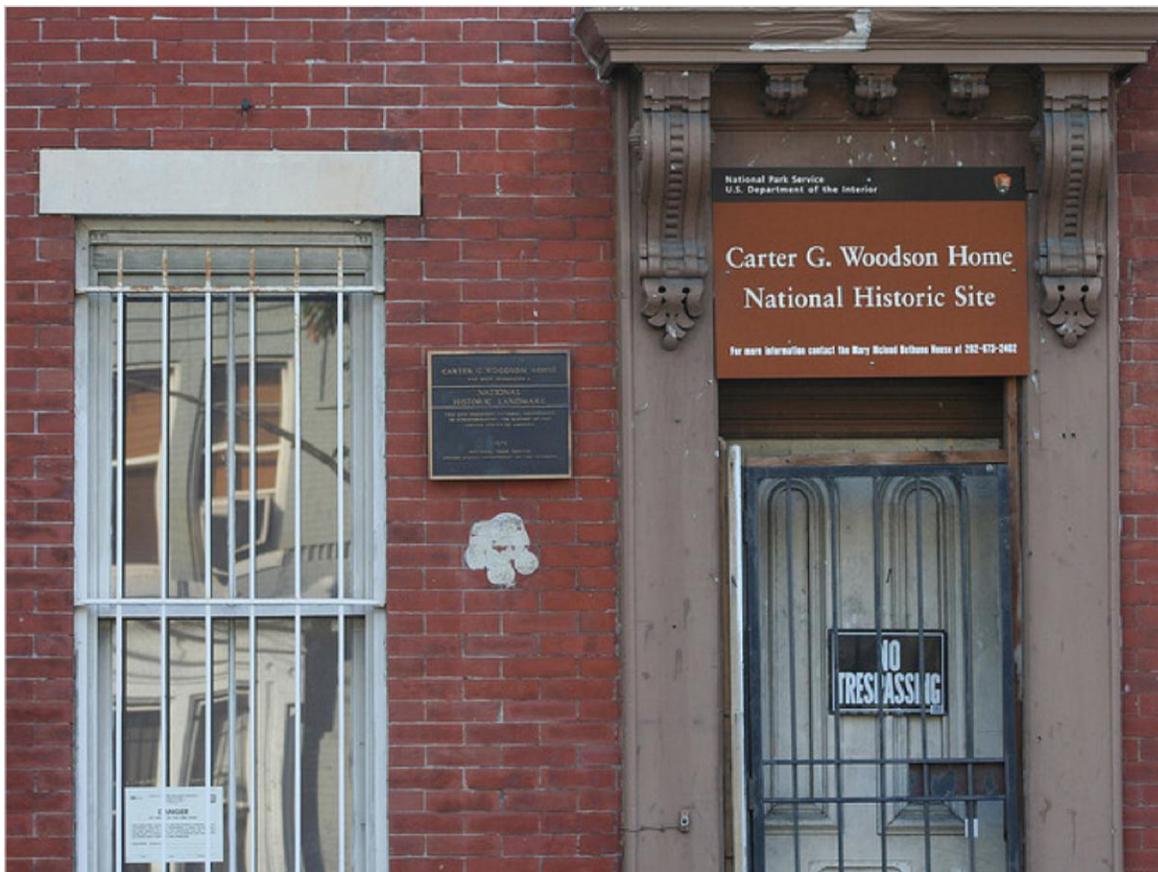
⁵²⁴ "Appendices," National Park Service, October 24, 2000;

http://www.nps.gov/ncro/woodson/pdf/Carter_G_Woodson_appendix.pdf.

2013, part of a hallway ceiling had come down, and a rear wall was being held up with girders.⁵²⁵

Presently, the cost of renovating the Woodson Home is \$10 million, not including \$1 million that has already been spent in emergency stabilization.⁵²⁶ This dwarfs the preliminary cost estimate of \$675,000 for renovation in 2001⁵²⁷ and CBO's 2003 estimate of \$5 million, which included the costs of developing exhibits.⁵²⁸

Unfortunately, if only the Park Service's 2003 recommendation not to establish the site had prevailed over a lawmaker's desire to see yet another national park established in DC, millions of taxpayer dollars could have been used to refurbish other parks frequented and beloved by the public.



THE CARTER G. WOODSON HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE REMAINS CLOSED TEN YEARS AFTER CONGRESS AUTHORIZED IT, WITH A "NO TRESPASSING" SIGN POSTED ON THE FRONT DOOR.

⁵²⁵ Michael E Ruane, "National Park Service Plans to Repair Carter G. Woodson House," The Washington Post, April 30, 2013; http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-04-30/local/38928025_1_national-park-service-carter-g-black-history-month.

⁵²⁶ Michael E Ruane, "National Park Service Plans to Repair Carter G. Woodson House," The Washington Post, April 30, 2013; http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-04-30/local/38928025_1_national-park-service-carter-g-black-history-month.

⁵²⁷ "Draft Special Resource Study: Carter G. Woodson Home," National Park Service, January 2001; http://www.nps.gov/ncro/woodson/pdf/Carter_G_Woodson_txt.pdf

⁵²⁸ 108 S. Rpt. 138

ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK- ISLAND SITE COSTS VISITORS \$120 FOR A
FERRYBOAT TICKET AND TAXPAYERS \$260 PER VISITOR

Isle Royale National Park in Michigan is allocated an annual operating budget of \$4.35 million.⁵²⁹ Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, also located in Michigan, has nearly the same operating budget of \$4.3 million, but accommodates nearly 100 times as many guests annually. Only accessible by four ferries and a seaplane, this 42 mile-long island in the middle of Lake Superior is home to the least visited National Park in the continental United States.

The \$4.35 million annual operating budget pays for the 55 full time employees that work in the park unit.⁵³⁰ These 55 full time employees outnumber the 44 average daily visitors that come to the island. The federal funds used to support the visitation at this National Park do not stop with the Park Service budget.⁵³¹ The Department of Transportation spends nearly \$1 million annually through the Essential Air Service

Isle Royale NP

Established: 1931

Visitors (2012): 16,746

Funding (2012): \$4.35 million

“More people visited 72 national park units in 2012 than have ever visited Isle Royale National Park since its establishment in 1940”

program to subsidize a SkyWest Airlines flight from Chicago-O’Hare to Houghton County Memorial Airport, where passengers board one of the ferryboats to the island.⁵³²

The creation of this National Park was spearheaded by a group of summer residents who formed the Citizens’ Committee of Isle Royale, with the help of a columnist with The Detroit News.⁵³³ They were concerned with the development of the island by private companies, and they pushed to make the island a state or national park. The Michigan state legislature rejected a proposal to acquire the entire island as a state park. However a Michigan

congressman, Louis C. Cramton, chaired a House subcommittee that influenced the budget of the National Park Service.⁵³⁴ With this influence, the Cramton-Vanderberg Act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to develop a new national park.⁵³⁵ Finally,

⁵²⁹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵³⁰ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵³¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵³² “Mesaba Aviation, Inc- Ninety-Day Notice Termination of Service- Hancock, MI,” Regulations.gov website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.regulations.gov#!docketDetail;D=DOT-OST-2009-0302>.

⁵³³ Philip V. Scarpino, “Cultural Resources on Isle Royale National Park: A Historic Context,” Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis, September 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/isro/parkmgmt/upload/Cultural-History-Context.pdf>.

⁵³⁴ Philip V. Scarpino, “Cultural Resources on Isle Royale National Park: A Historic Context,” Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis, September 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/isro/parkmgmt/upload/Cultural-History-Context.pdf>.

⁵³⁵ Philip V. Scarpino, “Cultural Resources on Isle Royale National Park: A Historic Context,” Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis, September 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/isro/parkmgmt/upload/Cultural-History-Context.pdf>.

in 1940, the Park Service had acquired a sufficient amount of private land on the island to officially establish Isle Royale National Park.⁵³⁶

This rarely visited park now costs federal taxpayers more than \$4 million per year. Those travelers that do plan a trip to Isle Royale National Park must pay \$120 for a round-trip ferry ticket. This is on top of the average cost to the federal government of \$273 per visitor. Michigan residents yearning to protect this remote island in Lake Superior from resource development may have been a noble cause, but doing so through its inclusion in the National Park System carried a steep price for taxpayers.



WITH 55 FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES, ISLE ROYALE NATIONAL PARK IN MICHIGAN HAS MORE STAFF THAN DAILY VISITORS. ABOUT 44 PEOPLE VISIT THE ISLAND EACH DAY.

⁵³⁶ Philip V. Scarpino, "Cultural Resources on Isle Royale National Park: A Historic Context," Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis, September 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/isro/parkmgmt/upload/Cultural-History-Context.pdf>

ALASKA PARK UNITS

Given the remoteness of the “the Last Frontier” state, it does not come as a surprise that Alaska is home to some of the least attended and least accessible units. However, it may come as a shock that one park unit in Alaska costs more than \$1,300 per visitor to operate, the highest subsidy per visitor in the entire National Park System.⁵³⁷ Alaska also contains the least visited park unit in the Park System. With only 19 visitors, the total visitation to Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve’s in 2012 was less than the size of a typical classroom.⁵³⁸ The total national park land acreage in Alaska is roughly the size of Utah.⁵³⁹

Park	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Established
Yukon-Charley Rivers NPRES	1,390	\$1,902,000	\$1,368.3	1978
Lake Clark NP & PRES	11,997	\$3,355,000	\$279.7	1978
Gates of the Arctic NP & PRES	10,796	\$2,863,000	\$265.2	1978
Katmai NP & PRES	39,818	\$3,967,000	\$99.6	1918
Wrangell-St. Elias NP & PRES	87,158	\$5,462,000	\$62.7	1978
Bering Land Bridge NPRES	2,642	share of \$3,702,000	\$52.4*	1978
Cape Krusenstern NM	24,950	share of \$3,702,000	\$52.4*	1978
Kobuk Valley NP	11,997	share of \$3,702,000	\$52.4*	1978
Noatak NPRES	31,000	share of \$3,702,000	\$52.4*	1978
Denali NP & PRES	388,705	\$13,881,000	\$35.7	1917
Kenai Fjords NP	280,933	\$3,809,000	\$13.6	1978
Glacier Bay NP & PRES	454,366	\$4,862,000	\$10.7	1925
Sitka NHP	207,095	\$2,067,000	\$10.0	1910
Klondike Gold Rush NHP Alaska	854,117	\$2,998,000	\$3.5	1976
Aniakchak NM & PRES	19	N/A	N/A	1978

*FOUR SITES SHARE A \$3.7 MILLION BUDGET



THE TOTAL NATIONAL PARK LAND IN ALASKA IS ABOUT THE SIZE OF THE STATE OF UTAH.

⁵³⁷ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵³⁸ “Aniakchak NM & PRES,” National Park Service website, accessed July 26, 2013; [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20\(All%20Years\)?Park=ANIA](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20(All%20Years)?Park=ANIA).

⁵³⁹ NPS manages 54 million acres of land in Alaska. “Alaska Parks...and beyond,” National Park Service website, accessed July 26, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/akso/parks/index.cfm>.

OVERSEAS AND INTERNATIONAL PARKS

The National Park Service administers several park units in American territories, including American Samoa, Guam, and the Puerto Rico. With five park units, the U.S. Virgin Islands has more than or the same amount of park units as 20 states. This includes the Salt River Bay National Historic Park & Ecological Preserve, which hosted 5,280 visitors in 2012 at a cost of \$151 per person.⁵⁴⁰ The National Park of American Samoa is the fourth most expensive park unit the in Park System, costing \$282.50 per visitor.

The National Park Service spends \$1.5 million annually to support Roosevelt Campobello International Park, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Canadian summer home.⁵⁴¹ An international treaty signed by Canadian Prime Minister, Lester B. Pearson, and United States President, Lyndon B. Johnson, on January 22, 1964 created the international park. The developmental, operational, and maintenance costs for the summer home is shared by both countries.⁵⁴² Americans wishing to visit the taxpayer supported site in New Brunswick, Canada must obtain a passport and pass through customs.⁵⁴³



⁵⁴⁰ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵⁴¹ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵⁴² "Park Administration," Roosevelt Campobello International Park website, accessed July 26, 2013; <http://www.fdr.net/park-administration>.

⁵⁴³ "Crossing the border," Roosevelt Campobello International Park website, accessed July 26, 2013; <http://www.fdr.net/crossing-border>.

It is always a shame to watch taxpayer money being wasted. In the case of park preservation, what is even a bigger concern is when people or events warranting commemoration languish in the hands of the federal government.

As we will read, many instances of this problem occur simply as a result of bad decision-making or forethought. For instance, Port Chicago Naval Magazine, a stirring memorial to both wartime sacrifice and victims of racial discrimination in the military, goes unnoticed by the American public because of its inaccessible location on an active military base. Other parks such as Kalaupapa utilize cumbersome management schemes that make the parks difficult or expensive to access, leaving their commensurate stories lost to the American people.

When a site languishes in the National Park System with high costs and low visitors neither the honorees nor the taxpayers benefit. Alternative sites (such as a display in a heavily trafficked location) or engaged managing entities may yield better results for spreading the tragedies and triumphs of American history to the public.

PORT CHICAGO NAVAL MAGAZINE NM- LEAST VISITED PARK UNIT IN THE CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES IS ONLY ACCESSIBLE ONCE A DAY, THREE TIMES A WEEK

Every year, Congress passes the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) to set priorities for our nation's basic national security needs. In 2009, tucked away on page 497 of the NDAA was a provision that established a new park named Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial.⁵⁴⁵ Located on Concord Naval Weapons station, an active military base, visitation to the memorial requires a two-week in advance reservation and significant personal information.⁵⁴⁶ The site is only accessible once a day, three days a week, and requires a guided tour to enter the grounds. Consequently, Port Chicago Naval Magazine is the least visited National Park unit in the continental United States, hosting only 599 visitors in 2012.

Port Chicago Naval Magazine NM

Authorized: 1992

Visitors (2012): 599

Funding (2012): \$177,000

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$295.50

Averaging less than two visitors per day, Port Chicago Naval Magazine is the least visited National Park unit in the continental United States.

The site memorializes a tragic event that occurred during World War II, when an explosion at the naval base

⁵⁴⁴ There are many sites that fit this category that are not included in this report. See Appendix II for information about visitation and cost levels for all the national parks units.

⁵⁴⁵ P.L. 111-84

⁵⁴⁶ "Port Chicago Naval Magazine: Fees & Reservations," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/poch/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>.

occurred during munitions loading operations. When an errant shell dropped onto the deck of a cargo ship, 5,000 tons of munitions went off resulting in the largest domestic loss of life during the war. Of the 320 that were killed from the explosion, 202 were African Americans. Following the explosion, the African American men refused to begin munitions loading operations again without proper training, resulting in 50 of the men being charged with conspiring to mutiny. These men were convicted and imprisoned with 15 years sentences.⁵⁴⁷ Following the war, the 50 men were released from prison and granted clemency, but the event raised the spectacle of racial discrimination in the military. Following the events, the military began desegregating units in June of 1945, and President Truman signed Executive Order 9981 in 1948, calling for the desegregation of the armed services.⁵⁴⁸

There is no doubt that this story should be shared with future generations, but the inaccessibility of the site raises several questions about whether the site is effective at educating anybody about these significant events. Is the second least visited site in the National Park System the best way to share this event or honor these men? Should the Park Service operate any park that costs nearly \$300 per visitor? Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front National Historic Park, located 30 miles away from Port Chicago National Memorial, could provide a more accessible location for visitors to learn about the Port Chicago explosion.



THE PORT CHICAGO NATIONAL MEMORIAL, WHICH IS LOCATED ON AN ACTIVE MILITARY BASE, REQUIRES RESERVATIONS TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE, REQUIRES A GUIDED TOUR TO ENTER THE GROUNDS, AND IS ONLY ACCESSIBLE ONCE A DAY, THREE DAYS A WEEK.

⁵⁴⁷ "Port Chicago Naval Magazine: Frequently Asked Questions," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/poch/faqs.htm>.

⁵⁴⁸ "Port Chicago Naval Magazine: Frequently Asked Questions," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/poch/faqs.htm>.

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE- LARGE HISTORIC ARMORY FAILS TO DRAW VISITORS

This Massachusetts site is home to the world's largest collection of historical small arms, has connections to Revolutionary leaders including George Washington, was host to a defining moment of our nation's founding in Shay's rebellion, and led breakthroughs in arms manufacturing during the 19th century.⁵⁴⁹

Located about 90 miles west of Boston, Springfield Armory was authorized as a National Park unit by Congress in 1974, shortly after President Johnson closed the armory in 1968 due to defense spending reductions during the Vietnam War.⁵⁵⁰ However, not unlike its time in service to the U.S. military, to this day Springfield Armory carries a hefty price tag. Attracting only 44 visitors per day, the Armory requires \$85 in taxpayer dollars for each visitor who walks through the door.

One way to reconcile this high cost would be to charge admission. Currently, there is no per-person or -vehicle admission fee in place at the park.⁵⁵¹ However, another National Park unit associated with a former national armory, Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, charges a \$5-per-person or \$10-per-vehicle fee to enter the park.⁵⁵²

Even with charging admission, it is unclear if this would turn the site around, as the Armory receives so few visitors in the first place. From the beginning of the Armory's tenure in the Park Service, park management complained, "visitation was inappropriately low and that it both could and should be raised."⁵⁵³ Unfortunately not much has changed since the 1970s. In 1979, NPS reported 15,607 visitors at Springfield Armory.⁵⁵⁴ In 2012, NPS counted 17,197 visitors, a meager increase, especially considering that initial estimates in the 1970s indicated that bringing the Armory under

Springfield Armory NHS

Authorized: 1974

Visitors (2012): 17,197

Funding (2012): \$1.46
mil

Subsidy per Visitor:
\$85.10

Not unlike its time in service to the U.S. military, to this day Springfield Armory carries a hefty price tag. Attracting only 44 visitors per day, the Armory requires \$85 in taxpayer dollars for each visitor.

⁵⁴⁹ "Springfield Armory National Historic Site: History & Culture," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/spar/historyculture/index.htm>.

⁵⁵⁰ "Springfield Armory National Historic Site: Frequently Asked Questions," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/spar/faqs.htm>.

⁵⁵¹ "Springfield Armory National Historic Site: Fees & Reservations," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/spar/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>.

⁵⁵² "Harpers Ferry National Historical Park: Fees & Reservations," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/hafe/planyourvisit/feesandreservations.htm>.

⁵⁵³ Ned Kaufman, "Conflicting Goals for a National Park: The Historic Arsenal at Springfield, 1968-2008," National Park Service, page 286, July 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/spar/parkmgmt/upload/SPAR-Administrative-History-2010.pdf>.

⁵⁵⁴ "Springfield Armory NHS," National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013, [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20\(All%20Years\)?Park=SPAR](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20(All%20Years)?Park=SPAR).

Park Service control would attract 35,000 to 42,000 visitors per year.⁵⁵⁵ The only years in which visitation increased substantially were those that involved traveling exhibits such as a replica of the Vietnam War Memorial being displayed on the Armory grounds.⁵⁵⁶

This summer, the Springfield Armory tried to draw more visitors with a “concert series, free to the public” featuring “big band, jazz, pop, oldies, 19th century, and more.”⁵⁵⁷



ONLY 44 VISITORS PER DAY TOUR THE SPRINGFIELD ARMORY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, WHICH BOASTS THE WORLD'S LARGEST HISTORIC COLLECTION OF MILITARY SMALL ARMS.

⁵⁵⁵ Ned Kaufman, “Conflicting Goals for a National Park: The Historic Arsenal at Springfield, 1968-2008,” National Park Service, page 286, July 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/spar/parkmgmt/upload/SPAR-Administrative-History-2010.pdf>.

⁵⁵⁶ Ned Kaufman, “Conflicting Goals for a National Park: The Historic Arsenal at Springfield, 1968-2008,” National Park Service, page 287, July 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/spar/parkmgmt/upload/SPAR-Administrative-History-2010.pdf>.

⁵⁵⁷ James Woolsey, “Springfield Armory site to offer summer concerts,” The Republican, June 29, 2013; http://www.masslive.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2013/06/springfield_armory_site_to_off.html.

KALAUPAPA NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK- ISLAND PARADISE INACCESSIBLE TO MOST

A national historic park in remote Hawaii receives as much federal funding as Mount Rushmore, but has less than 3 percent of the visitors.⁵⁵⁸ In fact, Kalaupapa National Historic Park has low visitation by law, requiring a permit prior to access and limiting daily visitation rates to 100 people, while prohibiting children under the age of 16. Established by Congress in 1980, this site has doubled as a Hawaiian medical facility for patients with leprosy.

In the mid-19th Century, due to fears of contagion, the Kingdom of Hawaii banished sufferers of leprosy to remote colonies, the longest lasting one of which was Kalaupapa, a peninsula of Molokai Island.⁵⁵⁹ From 1866 until 1969, patients diagnosed with leprosy were forced to live in the isolation settlement. Fortunately, in 1946, sulfone drugs were discovered to cure the disease and eliminated contagiousness. Hawaii, after having become a U.S. state, stopped the practice of containing patients in 1969.⁵⁶⁰

It was deemed that “the primary purpose of the proposed Kalaupapa National Historical Preserve is to preserve the resident-patients’ lifestyle and to preserve and protect the structures, sites and setting.... Tourist use, during the life of the existing community, must therefore be considered to be a secondary importance.”⁵⁶¹ Prior to the NPS involvement, the federal government was already making a strong funding commitment to the settlement’s patient community, providing 70 to 80 percent of the costs of the Hawaii Department of Health’s operation, including nearly 90 percent in 1979.⁵⁶² This commitment remains to this day.⁵⁶³

⁵⁵⁸ Kalaupapa NHS FY2012 budget was \$4.082 million and hosted 58,357 visitors while Mount Rushmore NM FY2012 budget was \$4.054 million and hosted 2,189,349 visitors.

⁵⁵⁹ “A Brief History of Kalaupapa,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/kala/historyculture/a-brief-history-of-kalaupapa.htm>.

⁵⁶⁰ “A Brief History of Kalaupapa,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/kala/historyculture/a-brief-history-of-kalaupapa.htm>.

⁵⁶¹ “A Proposal for the Establishment of the Kalaupapa National Historical Preserve,” National Park Service, April 1980; <http://www.nps.gov/kala/parkmgmt/upload/kalagmpopt.pdf>.

⁵⁶² “A Proposal for the Establishment of the Kalaupapa National Historical Preserve,” National Park Service, April 1980; <http://www.nps.gov/kala/parkmgmt/upload/kalagmpopt.pdf>.

⁵⁶³ “Hawaii to receive more than \$53 Million for Native Hawaiian Health and Education, Will Compete for More Federal Funds,” Office of Rep. Colleen Hanabusa, Press Release, June 15, 2012; <http://hanabusa.house.gov/press-release/hawaii-receive-more-53-million-native-hawaiian-health-and-education-will-compete-more>.

After the cure for Leprosy was discovered and the colonization practice was discontinued, Kalaupapa, with help from the local patients, was transformed into a national park unit. As a 1975 article about the transformation describes, “They don’t have to stay. They want to. For Kalaupapa is an incredibly beautiful, peaceful place and has been home to many of them for 30 years or more.”⁵⁶⁴ An idea emerged to transfer the colony from the US Department of Health to the Department of Interior to be run by the National Park Service. The plan was driven by a local patient-run tour company, Damien Tours, who would turn the island into – quite literally – a tourist trap.⁵⁶⁵

There are only three ways to get to Kalaupapa, by hike, by mule, or by plane. Each require a permit from the State Health Department and guide from a private tour group. In 1975, hiking to the colony was free, and Damien Tours charged \$30 for a round trip

Kalaupapa NHP

Authorized: 1980

Visitors (2012): 58,357

Funding (2012):

\$4,082,000

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$69.90

Despite annual NPS operating funds worth nearly \$70 per visitor, visitors can only access this site through a private tour company that charges \$298 per visitor plus tax for a flight, \$199 per person for a mule ride, or \$69 per person for a hike.

by mule, or \$16 round trip by air. Today, in order to access this historic park, a private tour company charges \$298 per visitor plus tax for a flight, \$199 per person for a mule ride, or \$69 per person for a hike. For those seeking to visit the site on their own accord, the National Park Service policy is clear: no one can access the park without a guide.⁵⁶⁶

Unbeknownst to most visitors, taxpayers have already paid more than \$70 for each of the 58,357 visitors to the island in 2012.⁵⁶⁷ Kalaupapa NHS receives \$4.1 million annually in federal funds and has 40 employees.⁵⁶⁸

The funding provided through the National Park Service is not the only federal support given to the area. In addition to the federal government’s reimbursement of medical expenses provided by the Hawaii State Health Department, the Department of Transportation provides subsidized commercial air travel for the Kalaupapa

residents. Announced in November of 2011, the Essential Air Service Program will subsidize service by Makani Kai Air Charters between Kalaupapa and Honolulu at a cost of \$932,772 in the first year, and \$923,509 in the second year.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁴ Lee Tyler, “Leper colony becoming Molokai’s main tourist attraction,” Chicago Tribune, March 9, 1975.

⁵⁶⁵ Lee Tyler, “Leper colony becoming Molokai’s main tourist attraction,” Chicago Tribune, March 9, 1975.

⁵⁶⁶ The NPS Kalaupapa website states, “All visitors must obtain a permit to enter the Kalaupapa Settlement. Children under the age of 16 are not allowed in Kalaupapa Settlement. The commercial tour company arranges the permit for their customers.” “Permits,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/kala/planyourvisit/permits.htm> .

⁵⁶⁷ The funding per visitor is \$110 if using the maximum legal limit of 100 visitors per day.

⁵⁶⁸ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf .

The purpose of the site is “to manage the Kalaupapa Leprosy Settlement in a manner that will ensure that the resident patients may live there with minimum disturbance from the general public and other outside elements; to provide interpretation for a small number of tourists; and to preserve for present and future generations the significant historical, archeological, cultural, and natural features associated with the settlement.”⁵⁷⁰ While a tranquil and peaceful place to respectfully honor the suffering and injustice of past events is fair – the use of the National Park Service budget is perhaps not.



VISITORS MUST OBTAIN A PERMIT AND A GUIDE TO ACCESS THE KALAUPAPA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK AND THERE ARE ONLY THREE WAYS TO GET THERE: TAKING A HIKE, MULE, OR PLANE.

⁵⁷⁰ “A Proposal for the Establishment of the Kalaupapa National Historical Preserve,” National Park Service, April 1980; <http://www.nps.gov/kala/parkmgmt/upload/kalagmpopt.pdf> .

LACKING NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OR AUTHENTIC HISTORICAL VALUE

Perhaps it will come as no surprise to the reader at this point, but there are a number of park units that bear little to no historical connection to the cause or figure they purportedly exist to memorialize. In the upcoming pages, we will visit a park with a “historic” church that was actually constructed in the 21st century, a Western fort where the only evidence of the original settlement was “a few cellar pits,” and a site that four years after its establishment as an NPS unit was discovered to have been built years after the namesake of the park died, negating any historical connection to the figure. This is not to say that there is no merit at all to reconstruction and preservation projects of structures with little to no direct national historical importance, but to include such spurious sites in the ledger of the National Park Service is plainly unjustifiable.

Moreover, there are some park units that have been included in our park system that may not attain the “standard, dignity, and prestige” for inclusion in the National Park Service that the first director of the National Park Service laid out. While some parks may piqué a niche interest among few and other parks may provide entertainment options for a limited area, the National Park System should be reserved for only those sites that bind us together through a *national* interest. The following pages present a sample of parks that may not rise to the level of national significance, as evidenced by poor attendance and recognition, to justify a national park unit.

FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE- NICHE PARK SERVES NARROW INTEREST

At a cost of \$221.30 per visitor, Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site is one of the 10 most expensive National Parks per visitor in the continental United States.⁵⁷¹ Established in 1979, this park located in the Boston metro area preserves the working space of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted.

While Americans throughout the country utilize the tremendous public spaces designed by Olmsted or his firm, including the US Capitol grounds, very few have set foot in his Boston studio. For context, one of Olmsted’s more notable park designs, Central Park in Manhattan, averages nearly as many visitors in one day (104,000) as the Frederick Law Olmsted NHS has hosted over the last 31 years (149,000).⁵⁷²

⁵⁷¹ “Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014,” National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf.

⁵⁷² “Greeter/Guide Program,” Central Park Conservancy website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.centralparknyc.org/volunteer/greeter-programs.html>.

The paltry attendance of this site should come as no surprise. The Park Service itself has admitted “its purpose is not to draw visitors but to act as a resource for landscapers across the country.”⁵⁷³ However, Congress seemingly had no such limited intended purpose for the park. According to the law establishing Olmsted NHS, the site’s mission is to “...preserve and interpret for the benefit, inspiration and education of present and future generations, the home and office of Frederick Law Olmsted.”⁵⁷⁴ Nowhere in the law was the niche interests of landscapers mentioned, especially to the detriment of the average park visitor.

Even for the limited purpose of serving as a resource for landscapers, the site has presented problems. The Boston Globe reported, “The Olmsted house is too small to serve as a teaching center, and on too private a street to even provide much parking.”⁵⁷⁵ Congress attempted to address this concern when it authorized the expansion of the site by 5 acres in 1998,⁵⁷⁶ but other more fundamental problems plague this park, best summed up by the Globe: “[E]xcept that it's historical, [it] hasn't got much to show a visitor.”⁵⁷⁷

Frederick Law Olmsted NHS

Authorized: 1979
Visitors (2012): 8,011
Funding (2012): \$1.77 mil
Subsidy per Visitor:
\$221.30

“One of Olmsted’s more notable park designs, Central Park in Manhattan, averages nearly as many visitors in one day (104,000) as the Frederick Law Olmsted NHS has hosted over the last 30 years (141,000).”



NEW YORK CITY'S CENTRAL PARK, ONE OF FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED'S MORE NOTABLE PARK DESIGNS, AVERAGES NEARLY AS MANY VISITORS IN ONE DAY AS THE FREDERICK LAW OLMSTED NHS HAS HOSTED OVER THE LAST THREE DECADES.

⁵⁷³ Scott Allen, “Park Service chief, in Lowell, says cuts imperil smaller sites,” The Boston Globe, June 1, 1995.

⁵⁷⁴ P.L. 96-87

⁵⁷⁵ M.R. Montgomery, “Growing pains at the Arboretum; Director shakes up a staid institution,” The Boston Globe, June 17, 1992.

⁵⁷⁶ P.L. 105-343

⁵⁷⁷ M.R. Montgomery, “Growing pains at the Arboretum; Director shakes up a staid institution,” The Boston Globe, June 17, 1992.

CHARLES PINCKNEY NHS- SITE'S NAMESAKE PASSED AWAY YEARS BEFORE BUILDINGS WERE CONSTRUCTED

When then South Carolina Governor Carroll Campbell announced that the farm home of Constitutional signer Charles Pinckney was going to become a National Park in 1988 he

Charles Pinckney NHS

Authorized: 1988

Visitors (2012): 45,258

Funding (2012):

\$537,000

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$11.90

Taxpayers continue to spend \$545,000 annually for Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, where there is not a single structure that existed during the Pinckney-era.

pronounced, "This is a wonderful time for the state of South Carolina because you're preserving a piece of our state that cannot be duplicated and cannot be replicated."⁵⁷⁸ In an ironic twist, the South Carolina farmhouse turned out to be none other than a replica of Charles Pinckney's Snee Farm, built four years after he had passed away.⁵⁷⁹

The farmhouse became a park unit in 1988, as the result of a local dispute over a private developer's plans to build a residential neighborhood on the 28-acre area.⁵⁸⁰ Local preservation societies called the development "excessive" and that it would be "appalling" for the area to have a neighborhood around the vacant farmhouse.⁵⁸¹ In the end, the preservation society saved the site through a \$2 million purchase, the developer turned a more than 100

percent profit on his original \$975,000 investment, and a South Carolina Senator ushered through a bill to purchase the site on behalf of the American people for \$700,000.⁵⁸²

All for a property that turned out to be a lemon.

When the site was added to the National Park System in 1988, it had never been studied.⁵⁸³ It was not until 1992 that historians using X-rays to examine the nails holding together the cottage beams found that the Snee Farmhouse was actually built in the 1820s. This made it impossible for Charles Pinckney to have ever stepped inside the site, as it had been constructed four years after Pinckney's death.⁵⁸⁴ Upon learning the news, the Park Superintendent attempted to defend the house as "an excellent example of a tidewater cottage."⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁷⁸ "Historic Farmhouse Bought By a Group in South Carolina," The New York Times, July 26, 1988.

⁵⁷⁹ "FAQs," National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/chpi/faqs.htm#house>.

⁵⁸⁰ Tyrone Walker, "A Piece of Revolutionary-Era History; Pinckney site seeks to boost attendance," The Post and Courier, May 19, 2005.

⁵⁸¹ "Constitution Signer's Home to Be Sold," San Francisco Chronicle, June 16, 1987.

⁵⁸² "Historic Farmhouse Bought By a Group in South Carolina," The New York Times, July 26, 1988.

⁵⁸³ David Foster, "Park Barrel' Politics Seen as Redefining 75-Year-Old National System Public Lands: Much of the Money Allocated to the Park Service is going to Historic Projects. Some have Doubtful Significance to the U.S. Heritage," Los Angeles Times, July 16, 2013.

⁵⁸⁴ "Frequently Asked Questions," National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/chpi/faqs.htm>.

⁵⁸⁵ Associated Press, "Early American Statesman Pinckney's Home Probably Wasn't, Historians Now Say," The Salt Lake Tribune, January 27, 1992.

Today, taxpayers continue to pay \$545,000 annually for Charles Pinckney National Historic Site, where there is not a single structure that existed during the Pinckney era.



AFTER BECOMING A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, IT WAS LEARNED THAT CHARLES PINCKNEY NEVER STEPPED FOOT IN THE HOME BEING PROMOTED AS THE "CHARLES PINCKNEY NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE." IN FACT, HE DIED YEARS BEFORE IT WAS EVEN BUILT.

WEIR FARM NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE- SITE HONORING AMERICAN ARTIST CONTAINS NO PIECES OF THE ARTIST'S WORK

In 2012, the American taxpayers provided \$46 for every visitor to Weir Farm National Historic Site, a site that preserves the residence and surrounding landscape of American impressionist painter, J Alden Weir.

From the very beginning, the expensive site has been one heartache after another. In 1982, months after breaking ground on a 37-home subdivision that had been approved by the town in 1963, the owner of the Weir home, with the help of local preservation societies, stopped the subdivision by suing over wetland violations.⁵⁸⁶ The preservationists contended that the road construction created a flood hazard by crossing natural drainage paths. Their objections delayed the project long enough for a Connecticut state historic trust program to purchase the farmhouse and the surrounding 50 acres in 1987, stopping the development.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸⁶ Samuel G. Freedman, "Artistic Fight Rages Over Farm in Connecticut," The New York Times, November 29, 1982.

⁵⁸⁷ The Associated Press, "State Buys Farm in Ridgefield," The New York Times, November 20, 1988.

With the steady support of the Connecticut delegation, Congress purchased this land for \$1 million and authorized Weir Farm National Historic Site.⁵⁸⁸

As the second National Park unit honoring an American artist, and the first to honor an American painter, this unit was justified as filling a purported gap of themes in the National Park System.⁵⁸⁹ However, when NPS Director James Ridenour called art critics in the Washington DC area he found a general consensus that Weir was “good-very good- but not on the national stature of many of our finest painters.”⁵⁹⁰ When Ridenour called John Frohnmayer, then Director of the National Endowment for the Arts, for his informal opinion on the potential site, the NEA director gave a “lukewarm endorsement” and left Ridenour with the “impression that there were other painters more worthy of consideration.”⁵⁹¹

Weir Farm NHS
Authorized: 1990
Visitors (2012): 21,939
Funding (2012):
\$1,018,000
Subsidy per Visitor:
\$46.40

Visitors to Weir Farm National Historic Site will be surprised to learn they will not be able to see any of J. Alden Weir’s artwork

There is a staggering gap when comparing the visitors to Weir Farm National Historic Site with locations that have hosted his artwork. Last year, 11.8 million people visited the National Gallery of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the National Museum of American Art, three of the locations where Weir’s artwork has been displayed.⁵⁹² In comparison, 21,939 people visited Weir Farm National Historic Site in 2012, and the



YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SEE THIS PAINTING, OR ANY OTHER PIECES OF J. ALDEN WEIR’S WORK, AT THE WEIR FARM NHS.

site has only had 284,625 visitors since its opening in 1993.⁵⁹³ The 11.8 million people visiting the art museums had an infinitely better chance of seeing Weir’s artwork, as Weir Farm National Historic Site does not display any of his artwork.

In spite of its questionable significance and poor visitation rates, taxpayers pay more than \$1 million in tax dollars annually for Weir Farm National Historic Site.

⁵⁸⁸ S. 2059. A bill to establish Weir Farm National Historic Site in the State of Connecticut

⁵⁸⁹ Saint-Gaudens National Historic site honoring the sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens was established in 1964. “Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site,” National Park website, accessed July 24, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/saga/index.htm> .

⁵⁹⁰ James Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books,1994. Page 84-85.

⁵⁹¹ James Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books,1994. Page 84-85.

⁵⁹² “Visitor Statistics,” Smithsonian website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://newsdesk.si.edu/about/stats> . “Annual Report for the Year 2011-2012,” The Metropolitan Museum of Art website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-museum/annual-reports/annual-report-for-the-year-20112012> .

⁵⁹³ “Reports,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/Reports/ReportList> .

MARSH-BILLINGS-ROCKEFELLER NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK – “AN ENTIRELY
NEW KIND OF PARK”

Deemed as an “entirely new kind of park,” Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park is designated to capture the history of conservation and land management.⁵⁹⁴ Located in Vermont, this park is centered on the mansion that originally belonged to George Perkins Marsh, an American conservationist. It was later to be owned by Frederick Billings, who established a managed forest and opened a progressive dairy farm on the property.⁵⁹⁵ The final owners, Laurance S. and Mary F. Rockefeller, grandson and granddaughter-in-law of Standard Oil founder John D Rockefeller, donated it to the National Park Service.

Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller
NHP

Authorized: 1992

Visitors (2012): 32,227

Funding (2012): \$2,054,000

Subsidy per Visitor: \$63.70

“An entirely new kind of park”

Some have observed, “the grounds at this park are so well managed means that it is a great place to bring the family and explore.”⁵⁹⁶ Unfortunately, many park enthusiasts are not taking that advice. The park is one of the least visited and most expensive parks per visitor to operate, costing \$64 for each of the 32,227 visitors in 2012.



THE MARSH-BILLINGS-ROCKEFELLER NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, WHICH WAS THE MANSION OF MILLIONAIRES, IS ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE PARKS PER VISITOR TO OPERATE.

⁵⁹⁴ “History and Culture,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/mabi/historyculture/index.htm>.

⁵⁹⁵ “Marsh – Billings – Rockefeller National Historical Park,” New England Magazine, <http://www.newenglandmagazine.com/marsh-billings-rockefeller-national-historical-park/>, accessed September 6, 2013.

⁵⁹⁶ “Marsh – Billings – Rockefeller National Historical Park,” New England Magazine, <http://www.newenglandmagazine.com/marsh-billings-rockefeller-national-historical-park/>, accessed September 6, 2013.

WOMEN’S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK: KEY BUILDING ON THE SITE
“TOTALLY FABRICATED”

Located in Seneca Falls, New York, Women’s Rights National Historic Park commemorates an 1848 gathering, commonly called the Seneca Falls Convention, convened in the town by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and other early suffragist leaders.⁵⁹⁷

Women’s Rights National Historic Park comprises a visitor center and four historic properties: Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, the site of the Convention; Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s home; and two other properties in the nearby town of Waterloo, M’Clintock House and Hunt House, also with ties to Convention attendees.⁵⁹⁸ Wesleyan Methodist Chapel is the centerpiece of the park. NPS heralds it as the “second Independence Hall,” and a structure with “historical importance and significance to world communities that believe in democracy and justice.”⁵⁹⁹

Women’s Rights NHP
Authorized: 1980
Visitors (2012): 27,534
Funding (2012): \$1.55 mil
Subsidy per Visitor: \$56.10

“A totally fabricated interpretation of how the chapel might have looked”

-Sen. Malcolm Wallop

In light of the importance placed on Wesleyan Chapel, one might be surprised to learn that the current structure is actually more the product of the era of hybrid cars and iPhones instead of horse-drawn carriages and the telegraph.⁶⁰⁰ The new Wesleyan Chapel is a 2009 “rehabilitation” of the original church in which the Seneca Falls Convention was held.⁶⁰¹ All that remained of the original chapel when the Park Service took charge of the property in 1985 were “two beams, roof supports, portions of two walls, and part of the brick foundation.”⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁷ This Seneca Falls Convention issued a “Declaration of Sentiments” based on the U.S. Declaration of Independence. See: “Women’s Rights National Historical Park: Declaration of Sentiments,” Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/wori/historyculture/declaration-of-sentiments.htm>.

⁵⁹⁸ “Plan Your Visit,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/wori/planyourvisit/index.htm>.

⁵⁹⁹ “Comprehensive Interpretive Program,” National Park Service, <http://www.nps.gov/wori/parkmgmt/upload/WORICIPFINAL.pdf>.

⁶⁰⁰ “Wesleyan Chapel Rehabilitation Project,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/wori/historyculture/wesleyan-chapel-rehabilitation-project.htm>.

⁶⁰¹ “Wesleyan Chapel Rehabilitation Project,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/wori/historyculture/wesleyan-chapel-rehabilitation-project.htm>.

⁶⁰² 102 S. Rpt. 336



WESLEYAN CHAPEL, 1993-2009



WESLEYAN CHAPEL, 2009-PRESENT

SOME HAVE CALLED THE CHAPEL, WHICH IS THE CENTERPIECE OF THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK, "TOTALLY FABRICATED" BECAUSE IT DOES NOT ACTUALLY RESEMBLE THE ORIGINAL DESIGN OF THE STRUCTURE IN WHICH THE FIRST WOMEN'S RIGHTS CONVENTION WAS HELD.

It turns out that nobody knows what the original Wesleyan Chapel looked like. Additionally, no records or blueprints have survived to shed light on the chapel's design. The chapel's congregation moved to a larger building in 1871, and the old structure was subsequently converted into an opera house, automobile showroom, movie theater, and, most recently, laundromat. In 1987, the Park Service decided that a fabricated chapel was better than a ruined chapel and held a competition that attracted over 700 entries to "synthesize the way the building might have looked in 1848."⁶⁰³ The winning design opened to the public in 1993. Some lawmakers described it as a "totally fabricated interpretation."⁶⁰⁴

This first chapel design was scrapped for the current "rehabilitation" in 2009 because it did not adequately protect the sliver of the remaining nineteenth century chapel from weather damage. Many community residents were likely supportive of this move, as several went on record in 2009 criticizing the old chapel's resemblance to a "construction site."⁶⁰⁵

Generally those who live closest to Park Service properties are often among the most ardent supporters. Women's Rights National Historic Park serves as an exception to the rule. In addition to complaints about the chapel design, the Park Service found that a good portion of the town had held a somewhat apathetic view toward the park's establishment. As one person put it:

... it was remarkable and exciting that the National Park Service would choose to put a spot here that really is held in the same regard as Yosemite ... It was a wonderful thing. But that wasn't shared by a lot of people. A lot

⁶⁰³ 102 S. Rpt. 336

⁶⁰⁴ 102 S. Rpt. 336

⁶⁰⁵ "Women's Rights National Historical Park: Ethnographic Overview and Assessment," National Park Service, July 3, 2009; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/wori/wori_ethnography.pdf.

of my contemporaries didn't see the purpose of it ... [or were] more indifferent.⁶⁰⁶

At a cost to the taxpayer of over \$56 per visitor, Women's Rights National Historic Park is currently one of the most expensive units to operate.

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE NATIONAL PRESERVE- NEW \$6 MILLION VISITORS' CENTER HAS LITTLE IMPACT ON VISITATION

In 1996, Congress authorized a new park unit encompassing 11,000 acres Tallgrass prairie land in Eastern Kansas that costs taxpayers nearly \$1 million per year and potentially millions more in lost economic opportunity to the local community.

Tallgrass Prairie
NPRES

Authorized: 1996

Visitors (2012): 18,877

Funding (2012):

\$967,000

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$51.20

Flint Hills' area residents were "just plain tired of the whole thing."

The Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve was born from an arrangement between the National Park Service, nonprofit conservation groups, and a Texas billionaire.⁶⁰⁷ This deal was struck to appease the local residents that were opposed to federal land acquisition. The agreement created a park where NPS could own no more than 180 acres of the unit, and a nonprofit would control the other 10,000+ acres, partially financing the land through granting exclusive grazing rights on the land to Ed Bass, a billionaire Texas rancher.⁶⁰⁸ With this deal, special interests got what they wanted, local residents' got promises of a flourishing tourist destination, and the American taxpayer got stuck footing the bill.

The state has yet to see any economic benefits from the park, and area residents are "just plain tired of the whole thing."⁶⁰⁹ Even worse, according to a local county commissioner, "We have lost opportunities for the survival of our county," referring to the loss of an offer from Florida Power & Light to build a wind farm in the county that could have provided \$500,000 a year to the county and school district along with payments to build turbines on residents' lands.⁶¹⁰

⁶⁰⁶ "Women's Rights National Historical Park: Ethnographic Overview and Assessment," National Park Service, July 3, 2009; http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/wori/wori_ethnography.pdf.

⁶⁰⁷ Shirley Christian, "A Prairie Home," The New York Times, July 26, 1998; <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/07/26/travel/a-prairie-home.html?src=pm>.

⁶⁰⁸ Shirley Christian, "A Prairie Home," The New York Times, July 26, 1998; <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/07/26/travel/a-prairie-home.html?src=pm>.

⁶⁰⁹ Karen, Dillon, "Residents Still Awaiting Prosperity from the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve," The Nevada Herald, November 28, 2004;

<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1908&dat=20041128&id=rd4fAAAAIBAJ&sjid=b9kEAAAIBAJ&pg=3912,1200888>.

⁶¹⁰ "Wind turbines shelved," Associated Press, October 6, 2004; http://cjonline.com/stories/100604/bus_wind.shtml.

Initial projections indicated that 100,000 annual visitors would flock to Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve when Congress created the park in 1996.⁶¹¹ However, the park has come up more than 80,000 visitors short. This is despite recent efforts to boost attendance with more trails, longer hours, and eliminating entrance fees in 2009. The park has seen annual visitation rates decline from 23,713 visitors in 2009 to 18,877 visitors in 2012.⁶¹² Yet somehow after fifteen years of poor attendance, the Governor of Kansas claimed in 2011 that the area is finally ready to “pop” as a tourist attraction.⁶¹³

Efforts to salvage the site as a tourist attraction continue at a cost to the taxpayers. Advocates claimed projections of 35,000 to 50,000 additional visitors upon the construction of a new \$6 million visitor center.⁶¹⁴ With \$3 million in funding assistance from NPS, the facility opened in July 2012.⁶¹⁵ The facility has had a minimal impact on visitation rate thus far with only a 1,000 visitor annualized increase during the first 6 months of its opening. Visitation during the first 6 months of 2013 had decreased by 500 people as compared to the first six months of 2012, prior to the new visitor center’s opening. The visitation since the visitor center’s opening does not surpass any year since 2005. Meanwhile, the American people continue to spend more than \$50 for every visitor to Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve.



WITH FEW VISITORS AND LOTS OF FRUSTRATION FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS, THE TALLGRASS PRAIRIE NATIONAL PRESERVE HAS FALLEN AS FLAT AS THE GREAT PLAINS.

⁶¹¹ “Tallgrass Prairie NPRES,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20\(All%20Years\)?Park=TAPR](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20(All%20Years)?Park=TAPR).

⁶¹² “Tallgrass Prairie NPRES,” National Park Service website, accessed July 24, 2013; [https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20\(All%20Years\)?Park=TAPR](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20(All%20Years)?Park=TAPR).

⁶¹³ Phillip Brownlee, “Will Flint Hills pop?,” The Wichita Eagle, May 25, 2011; <http://www.kansas.com/2011/05/25/1863429/will-flint-hills-pop.html>.

⁶¹⁴ Rick, Plumlee, “Tallgrass Park: Drawing More to the Prairie,” The Whichita Eagle, November 6, 2010; <http://www.kansas.com/2010/11/06/1575605/drawing-more-to-the-prairie.html>.

⁶¹⁵ Associated Press, “Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve opens visitor center,” The Hutchinson News, July 15, 2012.

SAUGUS IRON WORKS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE- SITE SET FOR REMOVAL IS
RESCUED BY 'BIG STEEL', EVENTUALLY DUMPED ONTO TAXPAYERS

After the Saugus City Council rejected a proposal to prevent the move of the historic, yet long neglected, “Iron Works House” from Massachusetts to Michigan in 1942, the town clerk lamented, “the town will always regret its removal yet will have the knowledge that it will be well preserved in Greenfield Village. We hope that you will cause a suitable tablet to be erected on or near the house showing the history of the building and of its site in Saugus, Massachusetts.”⁶¹⁶ Seventy-one years later, the location contains much more than a “suitable tablet” recognizing the building’s location – it contains an entire national park.

Saugus Iron Works NHS

Authorized: 1968

Visitors (2012): 11,847

Funding (2012): \$885,000

Subsidy per Visitor: \$74.70

“The town will always regret its removal yet will have the knowledge that it will be well preserved in Greenfield Village. We hope that you will cause a suitable tablet to be erected on or near the house showing the history of the building and of its site in Saugus, Massachusetts.”

Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site is a reconstruction of the first fully integrated iron works facility in North America.”⁶¹⁷ While sharing a location with the iron works facility that operated from 1646 to 1670, the park unit does not include a single building from the original facility.⁶¹⁸ The only structure remaining from the era, the Iron Works House, was constructed roughly a decade after the iron works facility closed. The Iron Works House is surrounded by a reconstruction of a 17th century industrial park, filled with a blast furnace, forge, rolling mill, warehouse, and dock area.⁶¹⁹

By the early 20th century, the historical integrity of the one link to the era had been diluted by major alterations. The man who purchased and restored the Iron Works House in 1916 disparagingly remarked that the only important quality of the Iron Works House was the frame.⁶²⁰ Yet, this structure that represented marginal historical value to its restorer and was long neglected by the Saugus community eventually became the linchpin for the establishment of this Massachusetts National Park unit.

In 1941, alumni of the Henry Ford Trade School, purchased the Iron Works House for \$10,000 with the intent of moving it to Dearborn, Michigan, as an 80th birthday gift to

⁶¹⁶ John Albright, Orville W. Carroll, and Abbott Lowell Cummings, “Historical and Architectural Data and A History of Ownership,” Denver Service Center National Park Service, November 1977;

http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sair/ironmaster_house.pdf.

⁶¹⁷ “History and Culture,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/sair/historyculture/index.htm>.

⁶¹⁸ “Frequently Asked Questions,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/sair/faqs.htm>.

⁶¹⁹ “Frequently Asked Questions,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/sair/faqs.htm>.

⁶²⁰ John Albright, Orville W. Carroll, and Abbott Lowell Cummings, “Historical and Architectural Data and A History of Ownership,” Denver Service Center National Park Service, November 1977;

http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sair/ironmaster_house.pdf.

Henry Ford.⁶²¹ Up until that point, the citizens of Saugus “had not appreciated the structure to any real degree and had let it deteriorate and fall prey to vandalism.”⁶²² But the prospect of the structure leaving Saugus concerned some of the local citizens, who organized an effort to repurchase the house in order to keep it in Saugus. Presciently, one of the first suggestions by the group’s leader was to give the site to the National Park System, which “would save the town all further expense in the way of maintenance and upkeep...”⁶²³

After failing to convince the town to buy back the site, citizens formed the First Iron Works Association (FIWA) and continued their efforts to keep the Iron Works House in Massachusetts. FIWA finally made a breakthrough to repurchase the house by garnering funds from the town of Saugus, the Massachusetts state legislature, and private funds from the iron and steel industry.⁶²⁴

The American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI), the primary trade association for North American steel producers, financed a five-year \$2.5 million excavation and construction of a replica site to commemorate the birthplace of American iron and steel.⁶²⁵ But the financial support from AISI would not even last for a decade. AISI dropped its annual maintenance subsidy in 1961, or as the plant’s tour guide phrased it, “Big steel has pulled the rug out from under us.”⁶²⁶

⁶²¹ John Albright, Orville W. Carroll, and Abbott Lowell Cummings, “Historical and Architectural Data and A History of Ownership,” Denver Service Center National Park Service, November 1977;

http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sair/ironmaster_house.pdf .

⁶²² John Albright, Orville W. Carroll, and Abbott Lowell Cummings, “Historical and Architectural Data and A History of Ownership,” Denver Service Center National Park Service, November 1977;

http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sair/ironmaster_house.pdf .

⁶²³ John Albright, Orville W. Carroll, and Abbott Lowell Cummings, “Historical and Architectural Data and A History of Ownership,” Denver Service Center National Park Service, November 1977;

http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sair/ironmaster_house.pdf .

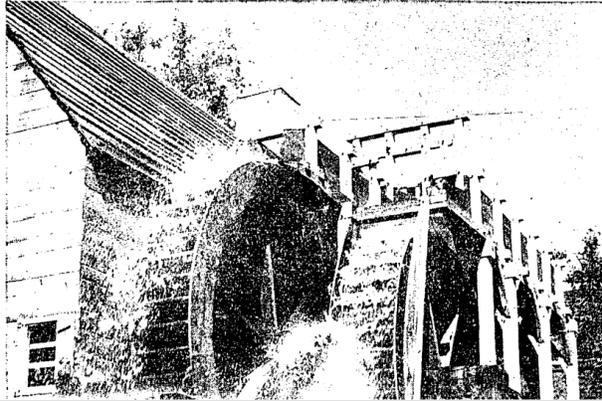
⁶²⁴ Joseph M. Harvey, “Direct Descendent of First Settler in Saugus Was Persuasive Motive Power in Restoration of 1643 Iron Works,” Daily Boston Globe, September 25, 1949.

⁶²⁵ John Albright, Orville W. Carroll, and Abbott Lowell Cummings, “Historical and Architectural Data and A History of Ownership,” Denver Service Center National Park Service, November 1977;

http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sair/ironmaster_house.pdf .

⁶²⁶ Robert Glynn, “Saugus Iron Works, Nation’s Oldest, Faces Uncertain Future: Big Steel Drops Subsidy, Funds Running Low,” Boston Globe, October 13, 1961.

Saugus Iron Works, Nation's Oldest, Faces Uncertain Future



Big Steel Drops Subsidy, Funds Running Low

By ROBERT E. GLYNN

The world-famous Saugus Iron Works—the oldest such plant in the nation—faces an uncertain future.

Big Steel has ended its annual subsidy of the North Shore tourist attraction, believed to be about 315 years old, after spending \$2.5 million on its excavation, restoration and maintenance during the past seven years.

Closed to the public for the Winter, after Sunday, the plant has only enough funds to keep it alive until next April 30.

But, J. Sanger Attwill, president of the First Iron Works Assn. that was in-

Smith and the former directors fail, Attwill feels "that will be the beginning of the end."

In preparing for a belt-tightening future, Attwill's association will lop off all its iron works employees this Fall and Winter except resident director Frederick A. Bonsal and maintenance man Manny Macedo.

Bonsal, incidentally, functioned as the plant's sightseeing guide during recent weeks after the regular student guides returned to their studies.

And, in each of his tours he told the sightseers of the association's dilemma and re-

marked, "Big steel has pulled the rug out from under us." Included in Attwill's penny-pinching planning is the possibility that Bonsal will lose his association-owned home on Pleasant st., Saugus.

Should worse come to worst, Attwill relates, "we may be forced to sell the property which should bring about \$25,000 and keep us going a little longer."

Also included in his plans is an admission fee increase from 50c for adults and 25c for youngsters that was paid this past season by some 14,000 adults and youngsters.

That attendance dropped off in recent years after the

iron and steel industry ceased distributing its national quarterly publication devoted to publicizing the plant.

That publication brought visitors from all over the world to see the restored plant that turned out 100 tons of iron annually for the Colonial farmers and laborers between 1641 and the early 1870's.

Originally financed by an English "Company of Undertakers" at a cost of \$165,000 and operated by indentured Scots, the mills produced iron used for making pots and kettles, hoops for barrels, casks and wagon wheels and slim bars that were cut into square nails, so badly needed by the hardy, pioneering settlers.

Upon the announcement, the FIWA director declared, "Somewhere, somehow, someone is going to come to our aid."⁶²⁷ On April 5, 1968, Saugus Iron Works was added to the National Park System by President Lyndon B. Johnson. Big Steel dropped its subsidy in 1961, but the American taxpayers continue the payment of \$74.70 per visitor for this replica of a 17th century industrial park.

Struggling to attain visitors, National Park rangers were hopeful that a \$6 million renovation creating new exhibits and improved access completed in 2008 would give Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site an attendance boost.⁶²⁸ The park's lead ranger stated, "We'll now be able to tell [our story] much better, more broadly, and, hopefully, to more people."⁶²⁹ However, the upgrades did not boost attendance, and the site had five of its six lowest annual attendance numbers since it opened.⁶³⁰

⁶²⁷ Robert Glynn, "Saugus Iron Works, Nation's Oldest, Faces Uncertain Future: Big Steel Drops Subsidy, Funds Running Low," Boston Globe, October 13, 1961.

⁶²⁸ Kathy McCabe, "Forcing New Ties: With \$6M Upgrade, Saugus Iron Works Site is Poised for a Rise in Visitors," Boston Globe, May 15, 2008.

⁶²⁹ Kathy McCabe, "Forcing New Ties: With \$6M Upgrade, Saugus Iron Works Site is Poised for a Rise in Visitors," Boston Globe, May 15, 2008.

⁶³⁰ "Saugus Iron works NHS," National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013;

[https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20\(All%20Years\)?Park=SAUGUS](https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/SSRSReports/Park%20Specific%20Reports/Annual%20Park%20Visitation%20(All%20Years)?Park=SAUGUS)

Visitors at Saugus Iron Works NHS



EVEN AFTER SPENDING \$6 MILLION TO RENOVATE SAUGUS IRON WORKS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE WAS UNABLE TO REVERSE THE SHARP DECLINE IN VISITORS TO THE SITE.

FORT UNION TRADING POST NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE – REPLICA FORT MAY NOT BE HISTORICALLY ACCURATE

Between 1828 and 1867, Fort Union was home to a fur trading post on the upper Missouri River. In 1966, Congress authorized the establishment of Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site “to commemorate the significant role played by Fort Union as a fur trading post on the upper Missouri River.”⁶³¹ Several days later, President Johnson signed the legislation into law that allowed for the purchase of the site’s more than 400 acres.⁶³² There had been proposals for the fort to be restored since the early 1900s, but on a much smaller scale.⁶³³

Fort Union Trading Post NHS

Authorized: 1966

Visitors (2012): 12,999

Funding (2012): \$819,000

Subsidy per Visitor: \$63.00

“Other than a few cellar pits, there [was] little surface evidence of the fort.”

The building that stands on this Park Service site is a multimillion-dollar reconstruction of the original fort.⁶³⁴ A 1957 National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings suggested that it would be next to impossible to create an historic accurate fort finding that, “Other than a few cellar pits, there [was] little surface evidence of the fort.”⁶³⁵ The National Park Service Guidelines for Treatment of Historic

⁶³¹ “Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan,” Harpers Ferry Center National Park Service, October 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/pdf/ip/FortUnionLRIP.pdf>.

⁶³² “Fort Union to Be Honored,” The New York Times, June 22, 1966.

⁶³³ Original proposals were about 40 acres. See: “Move Begun to Restore Old Northwest Fort,” Boston Daily Globe, July 20, 1925.

⁶³⁴ The Associated Press, “English Lord, Buckskinners, Tourists Attend Fort’s Dedication/Park Service Rebuilds Fort Union,” Colorado Springs Press, August 13, 1989.

⁶³⁵ “National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings,” United States Department of the Interior National Park Service, September 1957; <http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NHLS/Text/66000103.pdf>.

Properties concluded that this type of reconstruction “can be justified only rarely and, thus, is the least frequently undertaken.”⁶³⁶

In 2012, taxpayers paid more than \$63 for each of the 13,000 visitors to the replica site, helping to support the 8 to 11 employees working at the site at a given time.⁶³⁷ However, a 2010 Long-Range Interpretive Plan for the Trading Post, suggested that, “in order to fulfill the vision of this plan, additional funding will be required. Increase [sic] funds will enable the park to hire additional interpretive staff.”⁶³⁸

There are also two non-profit charities specifically dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the history of Fort Union. At the end of fiscal year 2011, Friends of Fort Union Trading Post⁶³⁹ and the Fort Union Association⁶⁴⁰ had significant assets dedicated to the preservation of the site. Yet, Fort Union Trading Post NM still receives more than \$800,000 in taxpayer funding every year.



FORT UNION TRADING POST, JULY 1948⁶⁴¹

⁶³⁶ Kay D. Weeks and Anne E. Grimmer, “The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings,” U.S. Department of the Interior, 1995; <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/four-treatments/treatment-guidelines.pdf> (P. 167).

⁶³⁷ “Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan,” Harpers Ferry Center National Park Service, October 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/pdf/ip/FortUnionLRIP.pdf> (P.22).

⁶³⁸ “Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site Long-Range Interpretive Plan,” Harpers Ferry Center National Park Service, October 2010; <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/pdf/ip/FortUnionLRIP.pdf> (P.37).

⁶³⁹ “Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax,” Friends of Fort Union Trading Post, <http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2011/363/354/2011-363354551-085546fa-Z.pdf> .

⁶⁴⁰ “Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax,” Friends of Fort Union Trading Post, <http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2011/363/354/2011-363354551-085546fa-Z.pdf> .

⁶⁴¹ “Site of Fort Union, North Dakota,” National Park Service website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://pdfhost.focus.nps.gov/docs/NHLS/Photos/66000103.pdf> .



FORT UNION TRADING POST, MODERN DAY ⁶⁴²

THE BUILDING THAT STANDS ON THE SITE OF THE FORT UNION TRADING POST NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IS ACTUALLY A MULTIMILLION DOLLAR RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ORIGINAL FORT IT COMMEMORATES.

⁶⁴² "Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site," National Parks Conservation Association website, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.npca.org/parks/fort-union-trading-post-national.html> .

PILT AND PARKS: CONGRESS LETS COMMUNITIES HAVE THEIR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO

The National Park Service is said to provide immense economic benefits to the United States. An annual report published by NPS solicits the economic might of national parks finding a \$31 billion impact on the national economy.⁶⁴³ The report published by the Social Sciences Division found that the 281 million visitors spent \$12.13 billion in the local communities. This visitor spending helped support 258,400 jobs, \$9.8 billion in labor income, and \$16.6 billion in “value added.”⁶⁴⁴

Conversely, the Department of Interior’s Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program provides \$393 million annually to state and county governments to compensate them for the nontaxable federal lands within their jurisdictions.⁶⁴⁵ About 94 percent of all federal land, including national park lands, qualifies as eligible land under the PILT program. Areas receive federal payments based on a formula that calculates acreage and population on federal entitlement lands. The PILT program provides about \$51 million in federal funds to compensate for lost tax revenue on NPS land.⁶⁴⁶

The federal government simultaneously boasts the National Park System provides a \$31 billion economic boost to communities surrounding national park units while NPS lands reduce local tax revenues from those same communities. When the National Park Service spent \$16 million to acquire 86 acres of land at \$186,047 per acre in December 2012, the federal government will continue replenishing the county’s coffers with PILT payments for the apparent lost tax revenues.⁶⁴⁷ Yet, according to the National Park’s econometric study, Grand Teton National Park received an estimated 2,669,374 visitors in 2010 that spent \$424 million in the area.⁶⁴⁸ With the state’s 4 percent sales tax alone, Wyoming would garner about \$17 million in tax revenue from Grand Teton National Park.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴³ The \$31 billion in economic benefits claimed by NPS is calculated using rough estimates of how many people visited the parks, estimates of how much they spent, and estimates of the secondary benefits the visitor spending had on the economy through a multiplier effect. Visitation estimates come from a wide variety of methodologies. Everything from hourly head counts at the Lincoln Memorial, to counting cars in a parking lot at Kalaupapa NHP, to using road sensors on the Blue Ridge Mountain Parkway is utilized to estimate visitation. The unreliability of the visitation numbers can be seen when Kalaupapa NHP’s reported visitation of 58,357, nearly doubles the amount of visitors that are legally allowed to visit (Kalaupapa NHP caps their daily visitation at 100 per day). Washington DC area residents attending a Crosby, Stills, & Nash, Martina McBride, B-52s or a Barry Manilow concert at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts are also counted as official National Park visitors. Even golfers at Potomac East Golf course in Washington DC are among those that are counted towards the 280 million national park visitors.

⁶⁴⁴ Daniel J. Stynes, “Economic Benefits to Local Communities from National Park Visitation and Payroll, 2010,” Natural Resource Report, National Park Service, December 2011; <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/NPSSystemEstimates2010.pdf>.

⁶⁴⁵ M. Lynne Corn, “PILT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes): Somewhat Simplified,” Congressional Research Service, March 29, 2013.

⁶⁴⁶ Staff estimate based on ratio of NPS acreage (81 million acres) to federal land management agencies acreage (617.5 million acres) applied to \$393 million in PILT payments in FY2012.

⁶⁴⁷ “Park Service buys 86-acre inholding in Grand Teton for \$16 million,” Yellowstone Gate, December 31, 2012; <http://www.yellowstonegate.com/2012/12/park-service-buys-86acre-inholding-grand-teton-for-16-million/>.

⁶⁴⁸ Daniel J. Stynes, “Economic Benefits to Local Communities from National Park Visitation and Payroll, 2010,” Natural Resource Report, National Park Service, December 2011; <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/docs/NPSSystemEstimates2010.pdf>.

⁶⁴⁹ Kay Bell, “State taxes: Wyoming,” Bankrate website; <http://www.bankrate.com/finance/taxes/state-taxes-wyoming.aspx>.

Does Congress need to enact programs to replace lost tax revenue for NPS land or is the econometric model that found the 280 million visitors to national park units in 2010 provided \$31 billion to the nation's economy flawed? The contradiction of the PILT program with the National Park Service's own report finds that the federal government could be unnecessarily costing the American taxpayers \$51 million.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF STATUS VERSUS STATURE

Many proponents of adding new park units tout the economic benefits provided by the National Park Service. If designating an area as part of the National Park System yields a 10 to 1 return on investment as found in the NPS study, then Congress should designate the entire country as a national park. Even if the \$31 billion economic benefits were taken as an unshakable fact, this does not equate to the status of a "National Park" as the driver of the economic benefits. It is the stature of the site, not the status, which delivers visitors and economic benefits.

As a thought experiment, one would not expect visitation, thus economic benefits to the surrounding communities, to the Grand Canyon to vanish if it were no longer a National Park.⁶⁵⁰ Likewise, as seen in many examples in this report, obtaining a national park designation does not automatically draw large crowds that create jobs and economic growth. For example, Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Historic Site is one of the least visited sites in the entire National Park System, but is located just blocks away from Independence Hall National Historic site, one of the most visited sites. If the economic value was solely dependent on inclusion in the National Park System, then both should receive relatively the same amount of visitors. But rather, people want to see where the Founding Fathers deliberated over the central tenets of our great democracy, not where a polish revolutionary sheltered for 9 months.

The visitation numbers at Charles Pinckney National Historic Site in Charleston, South Carolina "trail far behind" three historical sites that are not managed by the National Park System in the same area.⁶⁵¹ Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia attracts between 1.7 and 2 million visitors annually and is managed by a non-profit foundation. The iconic Niagara Falls received an estimated 8.7 million visitors last year and has been managed by the New York state park system since 1885.⁶⁵² ⁶⁵³

While there may be some marginal value to being designated as a national park unit, it is not the status as a national park that creates the vast majority of economic benefits; it

⁶⁵⁰ This is not a proposal to decommission Grand Canyon National Park.

⁶⁵¹ Tyrone Walker, "A piece of Revolutionary-Era History; Pinckney site seeks to boost attendance," The Post and Courier, May 19, 2005.

⁶⁵² Mark Scheer, "Niagara Falls doesn't really know how many people visit each year," Niagara Gazette, April 18 2013; <http://skift.com/2013/04/18/niagara-falls-doesnt-really-know-how-many-people-visit-each-year/>.

⁶⁵³ "History of America's Oldest State Park," Niagara Falls State Park website, accessed August 15, 2013; <http://www.niagarafallsstatepark.com/Americas-Oldest-State-Park.aspx>.

is the underlying ability of the site to draw visitors. Therefore, it is disingenuous to attribute the \$31 billion in economic growth to the managing entity, rather than the scenic landscapes and historical structures themselves.

The following section on NPS-managed versus non-NPS managed presidential estates highlights the distinction between the economic benefits of status versus stature.

PRESIDENTIAL PARKS

Many presidential Park Service units preserve the houses in which our former chief executives spent significant years of their lives, ranging from humble boyhood homes to palatial post-presidential estates. If asked to name a national park site devoted to a former president's home, the first that come to mind are Thomas Jefferson's Monticello or George Washington's Mount Vernon. However, these grand homes are actually not Park Service units. Other influential presidents lacking representation in the National Park Service portfolio include James Madison and Woodrow Wilson. Although homes associated with all of these presidents are open to the public, nonprofit foundations—not the federal government—preserve these properties for the enjoyment of the nation.

On the other hand, the National Park Service does count on its rolls numerous homes of some of our country's more inconsequential presidents. For instance, the Park Service does not have anything associated with Andrew Jackson, the most decisive political figure of his era and the founder of the modern Democratic Party. Instead, a private foundation owns and operates his Hermitage estate outside Nashville.⁶⁵⁴ However, his vice president and eventual successor, Martin Van Buren, whose presidency was mired by the economic Panic of 1837 claims the most expensive park per visitor for any president in the National Park Service's ledger.⁶⁵⁵ Upstate New York's Martin Van Buren National Historic Site was among the least visited sites in the Park System in 2012 and cost the taxpayers over \$58 per visitor.

In comparison, the nonprofits that operate presidential sites are well attended and well run. For example, Monticello's Thomas Jefferson Foundation recorded a net income in 2011 of \$440,000,⁶⁵⁶ and in 2010 it fared even better, bringing in \$3.17 million.⁶⁵⁷

When considering the inclusion of a former president's childhood home in the National Park System, a representative from NPS testified, "The National Park System consists of many previous residences of former Presidents. However, there are also many

⁶⁵⁴ "The Role of Philanthropy at The Hermitage: The Ladies' Hermitage Association," Website of The Hermitage, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.thehermitage.com/support/>.

⁶⁵⁵ Don Keko, "Martin Van Buren and the Panic of 1837," The Washington Examiner, August 19, 2010; <http://www.examiner.com/article/martin-van-buren-and-the-panic-of-1837>.

⁶⁵⁶ Thomas Jefferson Foundation Inc., IRS Form 990, 2011; accessed at <http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2011/540/505/2011-540505959-08af0274-9.pdf>.

⁶⁵⁷ Thomas Jefferson Foundation Inc., IRS Form 990, 2010; accessed at <http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2010/540/505/2010-540505959-07aed337-9.pdf>.

residences of former Presidents that are not part of the system. A study would look at whether the Federal government is the most appropriate entity to manage the site.”⁶⁵⁸

Congress often opts to give presidential sites the fast track to establishment and thus takes a pass on considering valuable management alternatives. A review of the NPS ledger finds that presidential sites account for many of the least visited and most expensive park units per visitors. As compared to the renowned presidential estates managed outside of the Park System, the sites presented in this section finds the perception that a site will flourish by simply attaining national park status is fundamentally flawed.

LYNDON B JOHNSON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Commanding the attention of any room he entered, our 36th President was a force to be reckoned with. A transformational president and considered by some historians to have been the most effective Senate majority leader in history, Lyndon Baines Johnson was a true Texan: brash, imposing, and larger than life. Faithful to his Texas roots, Johnson would often seek solace from the tumultuous Washington of the 1960s at his “Texas White House,” a ranch house situated on a compound in the Texas Hill Country to which he also retired and spent the remainder of his living days, passing away in 1973.

This president’s Texas estate was one that passed in full to the American people in 1969, just a year after Johnson left the presidency. The park’s gargantuan scope matches its colossal \$3.8 million annual price tag. The site contains some of the most extravagant buildings seen at any presidential park.

For starters, Johnson had an airplane hangar installed in the mid-1960s to ensure that travel between the Washington and Texas White Houses would be as efficient and well-guarded as possible. The park also still retains the old Secret Service Compound, built out of a fear that Johnson’s life may have been in danger.⁶⁵⁹

Lyndon B Johnson NHP
Authorized: 1969
Visitors (2012): 110,907
Funding (2012): \$3.89 mil
Subsidy per Visitor: \$35.10

“Rounding out the collection is the Junction School, which four-year-old Lyndon attended for one year”

Serving as gateways to the park are two distinct visitor centers, one notably being the 1968 Lyndon B Johnson Memorial Hospital, built only one year before the park was handed into the care of the Park Service. Rounding out the historical park is the

⁶⁵⁸ Senate Report 110-011

⁶⁵⁹ “Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park,” Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 23, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/presidents/lyndon_b_johnson_nhp.html.

Junction School, which four-year-old Lyndon attended for one year, and a few assorted historic buildings in nearby Johnson City.

This is on top of the three houses that occupy the park: Johnson's restored boyhood home, the log cabin of LBJ ancestor Sam Johnson, and the Texas White House.

For every visitor that visits Lyndon B Johnson National Historical Park, the taxpayer pays \$35.10. This makes LBJ NHP the fourth-most-expensive Park Service unit dedicated to an American president.

JIMMY CARTER NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Even though Carter's work has transformed him into a global personality, he has always remained the "Man from Plains" and still lives within the confines of the National Historic Site devoted to his history.

Jimmy Carter NHS

Established: 1983

Visitors (2012):

69,257

Funding (2012): \$1.65 mil

Subsidy per Visitor:

\$23.80

"Possesses an apiary to stress the importance of bees in the young president's life"

Although President Carter himself is known for his straightforward, unadorned demeanor, the park bearing his name is anything but. For starters, there is the Plains Train Depot, which served as a railroad depot from 1888 to 1951, when passenger service to Plains was discontinued. In 1976, Carter took over the structure, dubbing it his Presidential Campaign Headquarters. Visitors will now find the depot to be a self-guided museum devoted to the 1976 campaign.

Carter NHS includes a former school of the ex-president, Plains High School. Plains High currently serves as the visitor center for the park. Within, visitors can find a restored and furnished classroom, principal's office, and auditorium. Other rooms feature exhibits on particular facets of Carter's life such as his business career and his post presidency accomplishments. Carter's park also possesses an apiary to stress the importance of bees in the young president's life. The beehives are part of the Carter Boyhood Farm, which also houses goats and a mule named Francis.

The Jimmy Carter National Historic costs \$24 per every visitor to operate.

HARRY S TRUMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Harry S Truman NHS is the third-most-expensive presidential Park Service unit, at a cost of \$39.20 in federal funding for every visitor. The park comprises the Truman Home, where Truman and his wife Bess spent their adult lives; the Truman Farm, where Harry's family moved when he was in his mid-twenties; the Noland House, home of Truman's favorite aunt and cousins; and two houses belonging to his brothers' in-law, Frank and George Wallace.⁶⁶⁰

Out of these five structures, the Truman Home is by far the most relevant to the memory of Harry Truman. The house was known as the "Summer White House" during the Truman administration and saw the young Truman grow from small-town haberdasher to President of the United States. The other structures incrementally decrease in importance. For example, while Truman had ties to the Noland House, he never lived there, and the most significant event listed in connection to the property is that Truman returned a borrowed cake plate from the Noland House to what would be his future wife's home across the street, sparking their courtship.⁶⁶¹

Harry S Truman NHS
Established: 1983
Visitors (2012): 32,013
Funding (2012): \$1.25 mil
Subsidy per Visitor: \$39.20

The site is ripe for trimming costs, possessing property only remotely associated with the nation's 33rd president

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Cincinnati's William Howard Taft National Historic Site is currently the second-most-expensive presidential Park Service unit, requiring \$42 for every visitor. In 2001, the National Park Service pinpointed a parcel of property that would supplement Taft's birthplace and boyhood home. Was it a school Taft had attended, as seen at LBJ's and Carter's parks? Or perhaps it was a neighbor's house with which Taft had personal connections, like the Noland House at the Truman site? The answer is far removed from either scenario. What the National Park Service indicated as "land that would further the mission of the park" was none other than a 40-unit apartment building with no historical connection to the president, with the exception that the apartment building was "contiguous to the Taft property during the time William Howard Taft resided at the site."⁶⁶²

⁶⁶⁰ "Harry S Truman National Historic Site," National Park Service website, accessed July 23, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/hstr/index.htm>.

⁶⁶¹ "The Noland Home," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/hstr/noland-home.htm>.

⁶⁶² Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, "William Howard Taft National Historic Site Boundary Adjustment Act of 2001 Report," 107th Congress, S. REP. NO. 107-76, October 1, 2001.

John Parsons, Associate Regional Director of the National Park Service, bluntly admitted “...the National Park Service does not have a definitive plan for the use of this property at present.”⁶⁶³ He continued by listing a few potential uses for the property, including:

[improving] access to the site because of its location as a corner lot, and its potential for parking spaces; using it to aid us in telling the William Howard Taft story, as at least part of it could be restored to a condition similar to that which existed during the Taft years; and using at least part of it for administrative space, which would help the park carry out its business.⁶⁶⁴

William Howard Taft
NHS

Authorized: 1969
Visitors (2012): 19,629
Funding (2012):
\$816,000
Subsidy per Visitor:
\$41.60

“The National Park Service does not have a definitive plan for the use of this property at present”

-National Park Service

The Congressional Budget Office estimated at the time that the value of the apartment complex was \$505,000. Operational costs associated with the structure were “unclear” because, unsurprisingly, the Park Service did not know how it would ultimately use the apartment.⁶⁶⁵ The purchasing of major pieces of property without a solid plan is irresponsible—at best. Plans change, and the speculative justifications cited for purchasing such properties might in time become moot or redundant. Avoiding such acquisitions is a simple way to evade unnecessary waste of federal dollars.



THE WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE INCLUDES A 40-UNIT APARTMENT BUILDING WITH NO HISTORICAL CONNECTION TO THE PRESIDENT.

⁶⁶³ Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, “William Howard Taft National Historic Site Boundary Adjustment Act of 2001 Report,” 107th Congress, S. REP. NO. 107-76, October 1, 2001.

⁶⁶⁴ Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, “William Howard Taft National Historic Site Boundary Adjustment Act of 2001 Report,” 107th Congress, S. REP. NO. 107-76, October 1, 2001.

⁶⁶⁵ Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, “William Howard Taft National Historic Site Boundary Adjustment Act of 2001 Report,” 107th Congress, S. REP. NO. 107-76, October 1, 2001.

ULYSSES S GRANT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

The 1989 establishment of Ulysses S Grant National Historic Site marked a watershed moment in how the National Park Service reviews candidates for inclusion in the Park System. Against the advisement of the Department of Interior, Congress decided to authorize the creation of Grant NHS, but not without receiving an objection from none other than President George H.W. Bush. Although Bush ended up signing into law Congress's authorization of the park, he did issue a tersely written signing statement appended to the authorization:

...I am disappointed that the Congress did not accept the Department of the Interior's recommendation that performance of a formal new area study precede establishment of this Historic Site. Such studies enable the National Park Service to examine the suitability, feasibility, and alternatives for managing proposed new park units.

In the future, the Congress will consider many more proposals for new National Park System units. I firmly believe that formal new area studies, conducted under the management policies of the National Park Service, assist this process and lead to better decision-making. To protect the integrity and viability of the National Park System, completion of such a study should be a prerequisite for establishment of any new unit of the National Park System.⁶⁶⁶

President Clinton would follow President Bush's lead and go so far as to sign into law an official process for inducting new Park Service units, complete with a formalized method for studying these units. Despite these changes, Clinton's process of review lacked the necessary teeth to clamp down on Congressional abuse of creating new parks, most notably in the case of his very own boyhood home's acquisition by the Park Service.

Ulysses S Grant NHS

Authorized: 1989
Visitors (2012): 39,662
Funding (2012): \$1.26 mil
Subsidy per Visitor: \$31.80

“To protect the integrity and viability of the National Park System, completion of such a study should be a prerequisite”
-George H.W. Bush

⁶⁶⁶ George H.W. Bush, “Statement on Signing the Bill Establishing the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site in St. Louis County, Missouri,” October 2, 1989; accessed at <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=17609>.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON BIRTHPLACE HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Included in the 465 page Public Lands Omnibus of 2009 was the authorization of the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site, designating President Clinton's birthplace in Hope, Arkansas, as the 394th unit in the National Park System.⁶⁶⁷ During the 2007 hearing on the legislation, a National Park Service official recommended before approving the acquisition of the home as a National Historic Site, Congress should first authorize a National Park Service-conducted study:

The National Park System consists of many previous residences of former Presidents. However, there are also many residences of former Presidents that are not part of the system. A study would look at whether the Federal government is the most appropriate entity to manage the site. Some sites are managed by other entities, such as state governments and private foundations. Conducting a professional study allows Congress to be sure it is protecting an area that meets the criteria of the National Park System.

A study also will enable the NPS and the Congress to identify the costs in acquiring, restoring, and operating a potential site. We believe that the information gathered during the study process is invaluable and better ensures that the NPS can continue its progress in addressing maintenance backlog needs in our national parks. In fact, in March 2001, the Department also took the position that a study was needed when asked to testify on the designation of the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home as a National Historic Site. Similar to S. 2417 and H.R. 4192, that bill also proposed designation prior to the authorization and completion of a study.⁶⁶⁸

The statement also includes a legal basis for its recommendation of a study: "we suggest... that the subcommittee ensure that the intent of Congress, as expressed in Public Law 105-391, is carried out by amending the bill to authorize a study of the birthplace and the visitor center to determine whether they conform to the criteria of Public Law 105-391." The law, also known as the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998, contained a package of National Park Service reforms, one of which was the establishment of a formal process to study potential areas prior to their addition to the National Park System.⁶⁶⁹

⁶⁶⁷ P.L. 111-11

⁶⁶⁸ Senate Report 110-011

⁶⁶⁹ P.L. 105-391

While rules may be made to be broken, it is unfortunate that in the case of Washington DC, the rule makers are often the ones breaking the rules. In a bitter fit of irony, Congress completely ignored the review process they created in order to authorize a new National Park site to honor the very president who signed those reforms into law.

In 2011, the first year of tracking visitation rates, the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site garnered only 9,749 visitors and received even fewer in 2012. The site attracts an average of 24 people per day and costs taxpayers \$33 for every visitor to operate.⁶⁷⁰ While this report's hindsight may be 20/20, it was President Clinton's foresight in enacting the park reforms of Public Law 105-391 that should have prevented the addition of sites such as the President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site in the first place.

William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home NHS

Established: 2010
Visitors (2012): 8,894
Funding (2012): \$294,000
Subsidy per visitor: \$33.10

Congress completely ignored the process they created with President Clinton in order to authorize a new National Park site to honor President Clinton



CONGRESS IGNORED THE PROCESS CREATED WITH PRESIDENT CLINTON IN ORDER TO DESIGNATE A NEW NATIONAL PARK TO HONOR PRESIDENT CLINTON.

RONALD REAGAN BOYHOOD HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Reagan's childhood home was authorized for potential inclusion in the National Park System in 2001. The Speaker of the House convinced Congress to adopt a bill authorizing the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home National Historic Site before the National Park Service was able to conduct a study on the property. The location of

⁶⁷⁰ "National Park Service Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Justifications," Department of the Interior; http://home.nps.gov/applications/budget2/FY13_NPS_Greenbook.pdf.

Ronald Reagan's childhood home resides in the then-Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert's district in Dixon, Illinois.⁶⁷¹

Despite the National Park Service request to conduct a study, the Speaker was determined to pass the legislation as quickly as possible.⁶⁷² Also ignored was a dissent offered by a fellow Republican who argued that the study would only take one year to complete and was supported by the foundation currently overseeing the Reagan home.⁶⁷³ Nevertheless, the authorization bill passed both the House and Senate by voice vote without a study, and President Bush signed the bill into law shortly thereafter.⁶⁷⁴ However, the establishment as a National Park unit was contingent upon the federal government purchasing the home from the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home Foundation at fair market value – a deal that more than 10 years later has yet to be made.

A dispute over the house's value prevented a deal from ever being reached. Appraisals conducted by Interior Department contractors valued the property at \$420,000.⁶⁷⁵ The Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home Foundation valued the property at millions above the Interior's estimate and rejected the offer, calling it "insulting."⁶⁷⁶ Since 2002, there have been no efforts made to negotiate a deal, and the house remains under the sole management of the Foundation.⁶⁷⁷ Yet, despite the site not being counted as an official unit in the National Park System, the federal government still allocates annual funding for the site, providing a total of \$146,000 over the last two years.⁶⁷⁸

The Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home Foundation originally sought Park Service designation because its board members were getting on in years, and they felt that the home's designation as a park unit would ensure that their work would be preserved long after they were gone.⁶⁷⁹ However, shortly after the deal fell through with the Interior Department, the Foundation started rethinking their desire to sell. According to the

Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home

Established: N/A
Visitors (2012): N/A
Funding (2012): \$72,000

"Despite the site not being counted as an official unit in the National Park System, the federal government still allocates annual funding for the site, providing \$146,000 over the last two years."

⁶⁷¹ "National Briefing - Midwest: Illinois: Cost Stalls Historic Site," The New York Times, January 11, 2003; <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/11/us/national-briefing-midwest-illinois-cost-stalls-historic-site.html>.

⁶⁷² Adam Graham-Silverman, "Reagan Boyhood Home Designation Subject to Study," Congressional Quarterly, April 26, 2001; <http://www.cq.com/doc/committees-2001042600018451?wr=RDLYTlRja3lSajZwQVItdkpCWkVOZw>.

⁶⁷³ House Committee on Natural Resources, "Authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to Establish the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home National Historic Site," 107th Congress, H.R. REP. NO. 107-268, November 5, 2001.

⁶⁷⁴ P.L. 137-107

⁶⁷⁵ "National Briefing - Midwest: Illinois: Owners Reject Offer For Reagan's Home," The New York Times, February 25, 2003; <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/25/us/national-briefing-midwest-illinois-owners-reject-offer-for-reagan-s-home.html>.

⁶⁷⁶ "National Briefing - Midwest: Illinois: Owners Reject Offer For Reagan's Home," The New York Times, February 25, 2003; <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/25/us/national-briefing-midwest-illinois-owners-reject-offer-for-reagan-s-home.html>.

⁶⁷⁷ Stephen Dinan, "Reagan's own philosophy puts his boyhood home in limbo," The Washington Times, February 3, 2011; <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/feb/3/reagans-philosophy-puts-boyhood-home-in-limbo/?page=all>.

⁶⁷⁸ "Budget Justifications and Performance Information Fiscal Year 2014," National Park Service, 2013; http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/upload/FY_2014_greenbook.pdf

⁶⁷⁹ 147 CONG. REC. H8062 (2001).

foundation's executive director, "It relates a lot back to Ronald Reagan's way of thinking, and at least how we see it here — he didn't think that government needed to be so big, he didn't think government needed to be involved in our daily lives, and people really took that to heart here."⁶⁸⁰ Additionally, the Foundation had seen problems with government ownership when budget cuts forced some of Abraham Lincoln's sites to be closed nearby.⁶⁸¹

It is thus perhaps not the most pertinent question to ask *when* the Reagan Boyhood Home will be incorporated into the Park Service but rather *whether* it should be in the first place. The Foundation's public filings show that, as far as nonprofits are concerned, the Reagan Boyhood Home is exemplarily run. In 2011, the Foundation reported a net income of \$172,000. Notably, the Foundation reported not receiving a single penny of federal grant money, indicating that organization was staying afloat purely through its operational and fundraising capacities.⁶⁸²

Consequently, the Reagan Boyhood Home Foundation has demonstrated that it can manage its affairs just as well as many of the nonprofits administering the nation's celebrated presidential sites. On top of this, the Foundation does not even want government involvement in the site anymore. It is time to end the \$72,000 annual appropriations to this site and allow the Foundation to preserve the memory of our nation's 40th president.



THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ALLOCATED \$147,000 OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS FOR THE RONALD REAGAN BOYHOOD HOME NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE EVEN THOUGH IT DOES NOT BELONG TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE. A PRIVATE FOUNDATION RUNS THE SITE AND DOES NOT WANT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVED. "IT RELATES A LOT BACK TO RONALD REAGAN'S WAY OF THINKING" THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TOO BIG, ACCORDING TO THE FOUNDATION'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

⁶⁸⁰ Stephen Dinan, "Reagan's own philosophy puts his boyhood home in limbo," The Washington Times, February 3, 2011; <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/feb/3/reagans-philosophy-puts-boyhood-home-in-limbo/?page=all>.

⁶⁸¹ Stephen Dinan, "Reagan's own philosophy puts his boyhood home in limbo," The Washington Times, February 3, 2011; <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/feb/3/reagans-philosophy-puts-boyhood-home-in-limbo/?page=all>.

⁶⁸² Ronald Reagan Home Preservation Foundation, IRS Form 990, 2011; accessed at <http://www.guidestar.org/FinDocuments/2011/363/136/2011-363136460-0885e9a2-9.pdf>.

DECOMMISSIONED PARKS

One of the most effective solutions available for an underperforming park is to remove it from Park Service control through a decommissioning process.

The federal government has decommissioned national parks units a total of 26 times.⁶⁸³

⁶⁸⁴ The argument behind decommissioning is not that certain parks do not deserve preservation. Rather, it boils down to questions of priorities: Is the park still of national importance? And even if a certain site does qualify as nationally important, is the federal government the most appropriate entity to manage it?

If a park is found to be no longer a priority project in the National Park System, Congress can pass a law decommissioning the park, eliminating Park Service ties to the property and generally naming a specific grantee to which the park will be transferred. Parks have been decommissioned, and numerous success stories have come out of this process. In fact, it is not uncommon that a park unit flourishes when it is decommissioned.

The first park decommissioning occurred in 1895 when Michigan's Mackinac National Park was transferred to the state of Michigan, immediately thereafter becoming a state park at the request of the state's governor.⁶⁸⁵ With Mackinac Island's Fort Mackinac as its centerpiece, the park gained its national park designation in 1875 and was the nation's second national park after Yellowstone. The War Department administered the fort until the 1890s, when the U.S. Army decided to abandon it. Mackinac has remained a popular tourist destination as a state park ever since its decommissioning in 1895, recording its 20 millionth visitor in 2009.⁶⁸⁶

Transferring a park unit from the National Park Service to a state park system is just one of many options available when considering the decommissioning of a park. Additional solutions include transfers to local governments or private foundations.

OKLAHOMA CITY NATIONAL MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM

The monument dedicated to the victims of the Oklahoma City bombing is not included as a unit in the National Park Service. At least not anymore. The most recently decommissioned Park Service unit, the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum spent less than a decade in the hands of the federal government before being handed

⁶⁸³ Barry Mackintosh, "Former National Park System Units: An Analysis," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/history/history/hisnps/nps/history/formerparks.htm>.

⁶⁸⁴ Bob Janiske, "Gone and Mostly Forgotten: 26 Abolished National Parks," National Parks Traveler, December 30, 2011; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2011/12/gone-and-mostly-forgotten-26-abolished-national-parks9202>.

⁶⁸⁵ Bob Janiske, "Pruning the Parks: Mackinac National Park (1875-1895)," National Parks Traveler, May 10, 2011; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2011/05/pruning-parks-mackinac-national-park-1875-18958079>.

⁶⁸⁶ Bob Janiske, "Pruning the Parks: Mackinac National Park (1875-1895)," National Parks Traveler, May 10, 2011; <http://www.nationalparkstraveler.com/2011/05/pruning-parks-mackinac-national-park-1875-18958079>.

over to the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation in 2004. Even though this was a site undoubtedly bearing national significance befitting a national park unit, it was determined that both the memorial and museum would be more effectively run by the Foundation. The decommissioning did not disappoint.

Decommissioning the National Memorial and Museum not only made sense from a managerial point of view, it more importantly represented a return of the site to the

Oklahoma City National
Memorial & Museum

NM

Authorized: 1997

Decommissioned: 2004

“Donors began to question why their donations were going toward paying for the federal park service.”

organization most invested in the project. Not even a year after the 1995 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, then-Mayor Ron Norick of Oklahoma City convened a task force to explore ways to memorialize the tragedy, eventually deciding on a two-pronged approach of outdoor memorial and museum. Later in 1996, this task force became the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation. In order to receive advice and input on the memorial from those most connected to the tragedy, the Foundation formed committees that were drawn from the families who lost loved ones in the bombing, survivors of the bombing, and rescue workers.⁶⁸⁷

A year later, after the Foundation selected a design for the memorial as the result of an international competition, President Clinton signed a bill into law establishing the Oklahoma City National Memorial and Museum as a Park Service unit. The law additionally created the Oklahoma City National Memorial Trust, a government-owned hybrid public-private partnership, to own and operate the Memorial.⁶⁸⁸ The government would be in charge of day-to-day operations of the site, while the Foundation would bear all responsibility for raising and managing funds.⁶⁸⁹ Congress appropriated \$5 million for the site, but the Foundation outraised this sum more than three times over, soliciting \$17 million in donations during the construction of the memorial alone.⁶⁹⁰

On November 4, 2003, the memorial’s Executive Director Kari Watkins expressed concern at the Trust, arguing for it to be dissolved and the site returned in full to the Foundation:

⁶⁸⁷ “History and Mission,” Website of the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org/secondary.php?section=1&catid=193>.

⁶⁸⁸ “History and Mission,” Website of the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org/secondary.php?section=1&catid=193>.

⁶⁸⁹ Nick Trougakos, “Bombing memorial: Headed for change in operations,” *The Oklahoman*, November 4, 2003; <http://newsok.com/bombing-memorial-headed-for-change-in-operationsbrfunding-package-gets-okbrbill-provides-1.6-million/article/1954060/?page=2>.

⁶⁹⁰ “History and Mission,” Website of the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org/secondary.php?section=1&catid=193>.

The memorial has had to bear the cost of keeping the landmark staffed with six park rangers... private donors began to question why their donations were going toward paying for the federal park service... the switch [away from the Trust] would get the memorial off the hook for the cost of complying with dozens of federal regulations brought about by the trust's government-owned status... federal officials wouldn't exempt the memorial from any of the regulations because they feared a carryover to other national parks looking to dodge federal policies.⁶⁹¹

Shortly thereafter in January 2004, President George W. Bush signed into law a bill that amended the original legislation, dissolved the Oklahoma City National Memorial Trust, and transferred the site back to the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation.⁶⁹² The Memorial's decommissioning was the handiwork of Oklahoma's congressional delegation.⁶⁹³ As a result of their efforts, the role of the National Park Service was from then on limited solely to the purpose of providing interpretive services on the Memorial grounds.⁶⁹⁴

Today, the Foundation is thriving. Museum admissions, store sales, the OKC Memorial Marathon, private fundraising and earnings from an endowment allow the Memorial and Museum to be self-sustaining.⁶⁹⁵

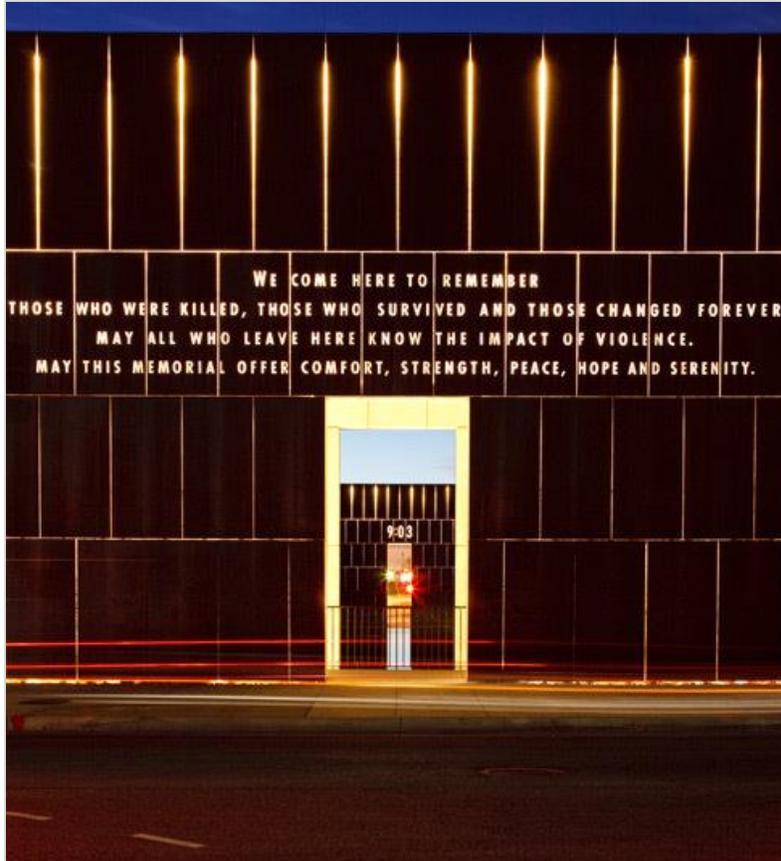
⁶⁹¹ Nick Trougakos, "Bombing memorial: Headed for change in operations," *The Oklahoman*, November 4, 2003; <http://newsok.com/bombing-memorial-headed-for-change-in-operationsbrfunding-package-gets-okbrbill-provides-1.6-million/article/1954060>.

⁶⁹² "History and Mission," Website of the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org/secondary.php?section=1&catid=193>.

⁶⁹³ Nick Trougakos, "Bombing memorial: Headed for change in operations," *The Oklahoman*, November 4, 2003; <http://newsok.com/bombing-memorial-headed-for-change-in-operationsbrfunding-package-gets-okbrbill-provides-1.6-million/article/1954060>.

⁶⁹⁴ "Oklahoma City National Memorial: Management," Website of the National Park Service, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://home.nps.gov/okci/parkmgmt/index.htm>.

⁶⁹⁵ "Memorial Foundation," Website of the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.oklahomacitynationalmemorial.org/secondary.php?section=10&catid=118>.



THE MONUMENT DEDICATED TO THE VICTIMS OF THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING IS NO LONGER A COMPONENT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE. IT WAS DECOMMISSIONED AND TODAY IS MANAGED BY A PRIVATE FOUNDATION WHICH IS THRIVING AND SELF-SUSTAINING.

MAR-A-LAGO NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

One rarely hears the words “historic preservationist” used within the same sentence as “Donald Trump,” but believe it or not, one of Trump’s Florida properties represents one of the most successful examples of park preservation achieved through decommissioning. Not only has Trump’s Mar-a-Lago Club preserved the opulent mansion of Palm Beach’s grande dame Marjorie Merriweather Post, it has also seen its value nearly double since Trump’s purchase of the property in 1985.⁶⁹⁶

Post, heiress to her father’s cereal empire and model Palm Beach socialite, set out in 1924 to create Mar-a-Lago, a veritable palace “straight out of the Brothers Grimm with Hispano-Moresque influences.” Nearly four years and \$2.5 million later, Mar-a-Lago became her home in 1927. Post lived happily ever after in the house until 1964, when at the age of 77 she attempted to donate Mar-a-Lago to the state of Florida so as to publicly enshrine her architectural legacy. As generous an offer it was, the state could not afford

⁶⁹⁶ Thom Smith, “The History and Memories Behind Mar-a-Lago,” Palm Beach Post, December 17, 2005.

the yearly upkeep of the “crown jewel of Palm Beach,” then estimated at \$250,000 per year.

In 1969, Post persuaded Secretary of the Interior Stuart Udall to designate Mar-a-Lago as a National Historic Site. When Post died in 1973, her will bequeathed Mar-a-Lago to the U.S. to be used as a “Winter White House.” Richard Nixon visited Mar-a-Lago once, and Gerald Ford hosted Anwar Sadat at the mansion. As gas prices rose throughout the 1970s and budgets became strained, the cost of retaining the property had spiraled out of control, climbing upwards of \$1 million per year in maintenance costs alone. The feds conveyed Mar-a-Lago back to the Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation in 1980.⁶⁹⁷

Mar-a-Lago NHS
Established: 1969
Decommissioned: 1980

“A first-rate example of the private sector’s capacity for preserving our nation’s cultural heritage.”

In 1985, a young real estate developer by the name of Donald Trump saw an opportunity in Mar-a-Lago, purchasing the property from the Post Foundation with the intent of using it for a private residence. With yearly maintenance fees too high even for the likes of Trump, the shrewd investor gave up the 126-room private residence and established the “Mar-a-Lago Club.” Mar-a-Lago remains a private club to this day, one of the most exclusive properties in the Trump portfolio.⁶⁹⁸

Even as a private club, Mar-a-Lago’s historical integrity is safely intact for future generations. The club asserts that it is the last remaining Palm Beach estate still retaining its buildings and land in almost identical form as its original conception. Additionally, the club has granted preservation easements to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, legally binding its guardianship of the property.⁶⁹⁹ This commitment to preservation did not come at a small price. In 2002, the Club was assessed for tax purposes at \$27.5 million. A year later, however, assessors halved that figure when Trump granted development rights to the National Trust. As of 2005, the Club had climbed back upwards in value to the tune of \$18.5 million.⁷⁰⁰

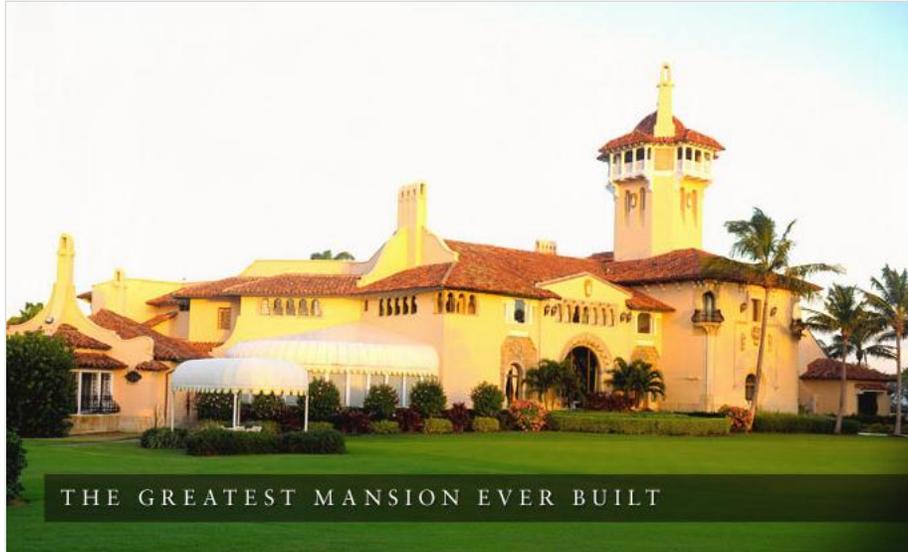
Mar-a-Lago provides a first-rate example of the private sector’s capacity for preserving our nation’s cultural heritage. Through decommissioning, Mar-a-Lago transformed from a white elephant property to a dormant entry on the books of a nonprofit, finally gaining its second wind under the stewardship of a real estate mogul. While no park has yet been decommissioned directly into private hands, the experience of Mar-a-Lago indicates that in the future, depending on the site in question, private ownership may represent a viable alternative for underperforming Park Service units.

⁶⁹⁷ Thom Smith, “The History and Memories Behind Mar-a-Lago,” Palm Beach Post, December 17, 2005.

⁶⁹⁸ “History,” Website of the Mar-a-Lago Club, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.maralagoclub.com/>.

⁶⁹⁹ “History,” Website of the Mar-a-Lago Club, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.maralagoclub.com/>.

⁷⁰⁰ Thom Smith, “The History and Memories Behind Mar-a-Lago,” Palm Beach Post, December 17, 2005.



MAR-A-LAGO, THE FLORIDA ESTATE OF A WEALTHY SOCIALITE HAD BEEN DESIGNATED AS A NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE. THE EXCESSIVE COSTS TO MAINTAIN THE MANSION LED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONVEY ITS OWNERSHIP TO A PRIVATE FOUNDATION. NOW A POPULAR CLUB OWNED BY BUSINESS MAGNATE DONALD TRUMP, THE MAR-A-LAGO DEMONSTRATES THE PRIVATE SECTOR'S CAPACITY FOR PRESERVING OUR NATION'S CULTURAL HERITAGE.

UNION STATION / NATIONAL VISITOR CENTER

Congress has authorized hundreds of National Park Service units over the years, to varying degrees of success. Indisputable among these is the unit that qualifies as the Park Service's most abysmal managerial failure in its entire history: the ill-fated transformation of Washington DC's Union Station into the "National Visitor Center."

Maureen Dowd, now of *New York Times* fame, perfectly captures the Park Service's folly in a 1982 *Time* article:

There have been two disastrous days in the history of Washington's Union Station. The first was Jan. 15, 1953, when a train hurtled beyond the tracks, through a newsstand and into the main concourse, where it smashed through the concrete floor and landed in the baggage room. Miraculously, no one was killed. The second was Feb. 29, 1968, when Congress decided to save the magnificent old building.⁷⁰¹

Dowd was not joking one bit about the extent of the damage inflicted by Congress and the Park Service. After a mere 5 years of Park Service control, the building was shuttered, condemned, and on the verge of collapse.⁷⁰²

⁷⁰¹ Maureen Dowd, "In Washington, D.C.: Last Stop for Union Station," *Time*, October 25, 1982; <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,953582-1,00.html>.

⁷⁰² John Mintz, "Now Boarding: The New Union Station; Renovation Invests Hopes in Revived Grandeur, Trendy Shopping," *The Washington Post*, September 25, 1988.

It is important to note that the history of Union Station was not always one of appalling disrepair and neglect. Architect Daniel Burnham's grand Beaux-Arts station, inspired in large part by the classical architectural wonders of Rome, opened in 1907 and would influence the design of some of Washington's other landmarks such as the Lincoln Memorial and the National Gallery of Art.⁷⁰³ Inside, the Union Station of the early twentieth century resembled in many ways the bustling hub of today. The station possessed numerous shops and restaurants in addition to a few more unique fixtures including a bakery, bowling alley, Turkish baths, doctor's office, and even a hotel.⁷⁰⁴ However, following World War II and the decline of the American railroad industry, Union Station's financial and physical condition started to deteriorate.

In 1967, a commission headed by Congressman Kenneth Gray decided to take action to save the iconic station. Gray's commission advocated a \$20 million transformation of the ailing railway station into a visitor center for Washington, DC.⁷⁰⁵ A year later, President Johnson signed into law the National Visitor Center Facilities Act, designating the former Union Station as the National Visitor Center, a National Park Service unit. Intended to be ready for use in time for the nation's bicentennial, the National Visitor Center opened on schedule on July 4, 1976, perhaps the last time anything went according to plan at this site.

The visitor center closed to the public two years later, failing to draw sufficient crowds.⁷⁰⁶ The centerpiece of the site was a huge pit cut into the center of the floor of the terminal's 90-foot-high main hall and outfitted for a slide show of Washington's tourist attractions. Unsurprisingly, few tourists wanted to travel to sit in a hole cut into the floor of a historic landmark. If the idea for the pit was not bad enough, the attractions pictured on the slides could be seen simply by taking a step outside the station.⁷⁰⁷

Union Station / National Visitor Center

Authorized: 1968

Decommissioned: 1981

“Toadstools sprouted from the buckled parquet floor, and rats had the run of the place”
-The Washington Post

In addition to this pit, the historical integrity of the new National Visitor Center was constantly threatened by shoddy construction work. According to historic preservationists, the Park Service nearly ruined the terminal's walls and ceilings through the inept use of nail guns and drop ceilings. While on one hand the government was haphazardly fixing up the station's interior with the finesse of an offensive linesman, it simultaneously managed to ignore major structural problems in

⁷⁰³ “History of Union Station,” Website of Union Station, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.unionstationdc.com/info/infohistory>.

⁷⁰⁴ John Mintz, “Now Boarding: The New Union Station; Renovation Invests Hopes in Revived Grandeur, Trendy Shopping,” The Washington Post, September 25, 1988.

⁷⁰⁵ 132 CONG. REC. S646 (1986).

⁷⁰⁶ “History of Union Station,” Website of Union Station, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.unionstationdc.com/info/infohistory>.

⁷⁰⁷ Paul Goldberger, “Rail Station Ends Trip From Ruin to Renewal,” The New York Times, September 29, 1988; <http://www.nytimes.com/1988/09/29/us/rail-station-ends-trip-from-ruin-to-renewal.html?pagewanted=2&src=pm>.

the terminal's roof. When heavy rains drenched Washington on February 23, 1981, water came gushing into the station, and volleyball-sized chunks of plaster crashed down from the ceiling. The Park Service padlocked the building that day. It was only a matter of time before "toadstools sprouted from the buckled parquet floor, and rats had the run of the place."⁷⁰⁸

By this time, estimates of the amount of federal funding sunk into the National Visitor Center ranged from \$122⁷⁰⁹ to \$180⁷¹⁰ million, far outstripping the \$20 million pitched to the public back in 1967. The government decided to cut its losses, and later that year President Reagan decommissioned the National Visitor Center through the Union Station Redevelopment Act, which transferred the site to the Department of Transportation. In 1986, the station underwent the "largest, most complex public/private restoration project ever attempted in the United States." The restoration took 2 years, and the refurbished Union Station reopened its doors on September 29, 1988.⁷¹¹

Remarkably, the 2-year restoration project was undertaken without any congressional appropriations. Instead, Amtrak, the District of Columbia government, and contributions from the private sector were used to finance the \$160 million project. Overall, this marked a new chapter for Union Station, which ever since has operated as a joint public/private venture in which both the federal government and private industry share in the station's profits.⁷¹²

No longer bound by the shackles of its former National Visitor Center identity and Park Service oversight, Union Station represents one of the most successful decommissions ever undertaken by Congress. By 1994, the station drew more than 7 million visitors annually, making it DC's second most popular tourist attraction behind the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. By 1997, it eclipsed even the Air and Space Museum, becoming the most popular tourist attraction in Washington.⁷¹³ Currently, the station draws more than 32 million visitors annually.⁷¹⁴

⁷⁰⁸ John Mintz, "Now Boarding: The New Union Station; Renovation Invests Hopes in Revived Grandeur, Trendy Shopping," *The Washington Post*, September 25, 1988.

⁷⁰⁹ John Mintz, "Now Boarding: The New Union Station; Renovation Invests Hopes in Revived Grandeur, Trendy Shopping," *The Washington Post*, September 25, 1988.

⁷¹⁰ "Testimony of David Ball, President of the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, before the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Present and Future Uses of Union Station," 110th Congress, July 22, 2008.

⁷¹¹ "History of Union Station," Website of Union Station, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.unionstationdc.com//info/infohistory>.

⁷¹² "History of Union Station," Website of Union Station, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.unionstationdc.com//info/infohistory>.

⁷¹³ "Testimony of David Ball, President of the Union Station Redevelopment Corporation, before the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure: Present and Future Uses of Union Station," 110th Congress, July 22, 2008.

⁷¹⁴ "History of Union Station," Website of Union Station, accessed July 16, 2013; <http://www.unionstationdc.com//info/infohistory>.



AFTER ONLY 5 YEARS OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CONTROL, UNION STATION WAS SHUTTERED, CONDEMNED, AND ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSE. TODAY UNION STATION OPERATES AS A JOINT PUBLIC/PRIVATE VENTURE AND DRAWS MORE THAN 32 MILLION VISITORS ANNUALLY.

CHAPTER IV: RECOMMENDATIONS

When President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act in 1916, Congress and the National Park Service were entrusted to be the curators of the American experience and the caretakers of the greatest gifts nature has to offer. As we approach its 100th anniversary, we have failed to live up to this high calling. With a deferred maintenance backlog quickly and permanently rising – only outpaced by Congressional calls for more park expansion – a thorough examination and reform of our National Park System is critical to curb the unsustainable trajectory. It is incumbent upon public and private entities of all sizes to help in this cause. But only Congress holds the keys to enact the fundamental reforms needed to save our national treasures so that future generations can continue to enjoy them during the 200th, 300th, 400th anniversaries and beyond.

In order to do this, Congress must take three basic actions:

- Eliminate the \$256 million gap between annual maintenance needs and funding provided by prioritizing existing National Park Service resources and augmenting current funds with recreational fee reforms, then redirect LWCF funding used to expand park service property until the backlog is eliminated⁷¹⁵
- Evaluate the National Park System to ensure all of the park units truly fit the high standard that the American people expect and identify sites that can be commemorated or managed more effectively outside of the Park System
- Reform the way that new parks are supported, including obtaining non-federal funding and utilizing an endowment – rather than annual appropriations – to avoid the further dilution of the annual park budget

⁷¹⁵ A component of the NPS deferred maintenance backlog is road maintenance, which receives \$168 million through Federal Highway Appropriations. Determining a way to reduce the \$3.3 billion in priority deferred road projects, whether through NPS appropriations or Federal Highway appropriations, should be considered prior to the authorization of a new highway bill in September 2014.

ELIMINATE THE MAINTENANCE FUNDING SHORTFALL BY REDIRECTING LOWER PRIORITY SPENDING AND REFORMING THE RECREATION FEES PROGRAM

“...appropriated dollars should continue to serve as the primary means of addressing the deferred maintenance backlog.”⁷¹⁶

-Jon Jarvis, current National Park Service Director

A budget is a statement of policy direction and priorities. For several decades, Congress has abandoned sound budget making, placing parochial short-term desires over the best long-term interest of the nation. As a result, the National Park Service does not have the ability to maintain some of the most iconic and beloved sites in the United States.

As National Park Service Director Jarvis pointed out in his prepared testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to explore alternative funding streams to address the deferred maintenance backlog, “appropriated dollars should continue to serve as the primary means of addressing the deferred maintenance backlog.”⁷¹⁷ With only roughly half of the National Park Service’s \$2.6 billion discretionary appropriations going towards operations at the individual park units, there is ample opportunity to reprioritize funding without directly impacting the day-to-day operations at the parks.

STEMMING THE BACKLOG GROWTH BY CLOSING THE \$256 MILLION ANNUAL FUNDING SHORTFALL

“it’s not very sexy to fix a sewer system or maintain a trail. You don’t get headlines for that. It would be nice to get them more money, but we’re constrained”⁷¹⁸

-Rep. Ralph Regula, former House Chairman of Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior

The NPS annual budget underfunds maintenance activities by \$256 million annually while funds are used to promote car shows, restore neon signs, and support Washington DC concerts. These activities would be questionable uses of federal funds in a sustainable budget environment. Under the duress of a \$17 trillion national debt and an

⁷¹⁶ Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for an oversight hearing to consider supplemental funding options to support the National Park Service’s Efforts to address deferred maintenance and operational needs, July 25, 2013; http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6d4ed073-b1f5-42cf-a61a-122be71e67b9 .

⁷¹⁷ Statement of Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, for an oversight hearing to consider supplemental funding options to support the National Park Service’s Efforts to address deferred maintenance and operational needs, July 25, 2013; http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6d4ed073-b1f5-42cf-a61a-122be71e67b9 .

⁷¹⁸ Michael Janofsky, “National Parks, Strained by Record Crowds, Face a Crisis,” The New York Times, July 25, 1999.

escalating \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog, these expenditures of tax dollars are inexcusable.

Congress should scrutinize the expansive non-park support bureaucracy, review and consolidate duplicative or overlapping activities, and eliminate funding for programs and projects that fall outside the scope of the Park Service's core mission. These savings should be redirected towards closing the \$256 million annual shortfall in deferred maintenance funding.

Congress should increase efficiencies and reduce or eliminate funding that is not central to the National Park Service's mission by making the following reforms:

- Enact the President's recommendation to reduce the low-priority Heritage Partnership Programs by \$8.4 million and allow the authorizations for the 12 oldest National Heritage Areas to expire. Congress should then wind down the remaining 37 National Heritage Areas over the next five years by reducing the remaining \$9 million by 20 percent annually. **Potential annual savings: \$8.4 up to \$17.9 million after 5 years** (for more info see page 36)
- Eliminate the Route 66 National Historic Highway Program. **Potential annual savings: \$289,000** (for more info see page 44)
- Eliminate the Chesapeake Gateways and Trails Program. **Potential annual savings: \$1.9 million** (for more info see page 43)
- Fully offset the costs of the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program by collecting fees for services provided or eliminate the program. **Potential annual savings \$10.1 million** (for more info see page 39)
- Enact the administration's proposal to eliminate the Capital Area Performing Arts Program. **Potential annual savings: \$2.3 million** (for more info see page 41)
- Eliminate the International Park Affairs Program. **Potential annual savings: \$1.65 million** (for more info see page 62)
- Eliminate the Heritage Education Services Program. **Potential annual savings: \$375,000** (for more info see page 66)
- Eliminate Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) for national park properties. **Potential annual savings: estimated \$51 million** (for more info see page 164)

- Reform the National Registry Programs to fully offset the \$9.1 million in costs with initial application and/or membership fees. **Potential annual savings: \$9.1 million** (for more info see page 67)
- Perform a comprehensive review of individual base unit, regional, specialty, and system-wide support activities to identify and consolidate inter-agency and intra-agency duplication and waste, with the goal of downsizing the regional and service wide support activities by 20 percent. **Potential annual savings: \$90.95 million** (for more info see page 49)

Savings directed toward backlog by reducing low priority spending: \$185.6 million

MAKE SENSIBLE REFORMS TO THE RECREATIONAL FEES PROGRAM THAT INCREASE EFFICIENCIES WHILE MAINTAINING AFFORDABILITY

*"I believe the time will come when Yellowstone, Yosemite, Mount Rainier, Sequoia, and General Grant national parks and probably one or more members of the system will yield sufficient revenue to cover costs of administration and maintenance improvements."*⁷¹⁹

-Horace M. Albright, NPS Director, 1917

Congress has an opportunity to reform the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) to augment the funds available to address the deferred maintenance backlog before reauthorizing the program in December 2014. Congress should take the following actions to set priorities, modernize collections, and move towards more practical pricing (for more info see page 76):

- Parks with larger than a \$1 million deferred maintenance backlog must use 80 percent of recreational fee revenues after collection and administrative costs for deferred maintenance work. **Potential annual increase in backlog funding: \$33 million**
- Increase the price of the lifetime senior pass from \$10 to \$80. **Potential annual revenue increase: up to \$35 million**
- Implement more efficient collection process to reduce collection and administrative costs from 32 percent of fee collections to 25 percent. **Potential annual savings from efficiency reforms: \$13 million**

⁷¹⁹ Donald Leal, "Don Leal on Self-Supporting National Parks," Property and Environment Research Center website, <http://perc.org/articles/don-leal-self-supporting-national-parks>.

- Increase price of annual pass from \$80 to \$110. **Potential annual revenue increase: up to \$8 million**
- Eliminate ban on recreation fees for all parks and implement fees where feasible and appropriate. **Potential savings unknown (illustrative example of Great Smoky NP fees could raise \$19.2 million annually for \$2 per visitor on page 79)**

Total deferred maintenance funding increase through FLREA reforms: **\$89 million**⁷²⁰

Total savings redirected to close the maintenance funding shortfall: \$274.6 million

PAYING DOWN THE \$11.5 BILLION DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG BY REFORMING THE LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

“...because of the overall budget constraints under which we are operating, every property that is added to the National Park System negatively impacts our ability to address the deferred maintenance backlog.”⁷²¹

-J.T. Reynolds, former Superintendent of Death Valley National Park

The federal government owns nearly one-third of all the land in the United States. Yet hundreds of millions of dollars are spent acquiring additional land for the federal government each year while the current land base cannot be properly maintained. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the primary funding source for federal land acquisition, spends an average of \$380 million in federal funds to purchase more federal land. However, these funds cannot be used to maintain or fix the property we already own. Adding more acreage every year without addressing the ballooning \$11.5 billion NPS deferred maintenance backlog (over \$20 billion for all federal lands) is a contradiction to the “fix it first” strategy that Congress must correct (for more information see page 71).

Congress should reform the LWCF program so that 3 out of every 4 LWCF dollars are utilized for the deferred maintenance backlog until it drops below \$1 billion.

Potential additional annual funds to reduce deferred maintenance backlog:

National Park Service: \$42.75 million

All land management agencies: \$162-\$285 million

⁷²⁰ If the suggested reforms produced \$89 million in added revenue, the fees rates would still only average less than one dollar per visitor.

⁷²¹ Testimony of J.T. Reynolds, Superintendent of Death Valley National Park, before the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands Concerning The Impact Land Acquisition Has on the National Park Service Maintenance Backlog, Park Service Management Priorities, and Local Communities, September 27, 2003; <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-108hhrg89566/html/CHRG-108hhrg89566.htm> .

REVIEW CURRENT NATIONAL PARK UNITS AND CONSIDER MORE APPROPRIATE PLANS OR MANAGING ENTITIES

“The national park system as now constituted should not be lowered in standard, dignity, and prestige by the inclusion of areas which express in less than the highest terms the particular class or kind of exhibit which they represent.”⁷²²

-Stephen Mather, first director of the National Park Service

The report contains 37 examples of the more egregious, wasteful, or otherwise questionable expenses to the National Park System. The parks included in the report should be considered a sample – not a comprehensive review – of park units that could contribute to the dilution of the “standard, dignity, and prestige” of the National Park System.

Importantly, this report is not a critique of the relative significance of some park units versus others. Just because a site was not included in the report does not mean it should be endorsed as a nationally significant unit worthy of inclusion in the National Park System. Likewise, inclusion of a park site in this report does not necessarily call for its decommissioning.

Instead, these examples should compel a broader scrutiny of the entire National Park System. It is fully appropriate to review the choices of past Congresses to establish park units that may not fit the criteria of what the average American would expect of a national park area. Past decisions that have resulted in 14 parks costing more than \$100 per visitor to operate or 70 parks that receive less than 100 visitors per day should be the first to be examined for potential operational reforms or transitioning to a more suitable managing entity. Evaluations should include, but not be limited to, the objective analysis of funding per visitor contained within the appendix of this report. An appraisal should review the circumstance of how the park was established during congressional or administrative consideration and benefit from the hindsight of its subsequent operation after its inclusion in the Park System. While these are ultimately subjective analyses, examination of the National Park System must be kept within the context of limited resources and a crumbling infrastructure.

⁷²² “THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: A Brief History,” National Park Service website, accessed July 17, 2013; <http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/hisnps/npshistory/npshisto.htm>.

NEW PARK UNITS MUST BE SELF-SUFFICIENT

“We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune.”⁷²³

-Theodore Roosevelt, Address to Citizens of Dickinson, Dakota Territory, 1886

As our nation’s history evolves, there will undoubtedly be more areas that warrant the national recognition of a park service designation in the future. Too often, a park service designation is driven by the prospects of economic development and the desire for a politician to secure an annual federal funding stream for their local constituents. These special site designations should be made to provide national recognition – not federal revenue.

Congress should reform the method of establishing new park units by creating self-sustaining funding mechanisms rather than placing them under annual discretionary appropriations. Any new park unit should utilize an endowment seeded with an initial federal investment matched on a dollar for dollar with non-federal funds. The endowment must be large enough to cover annual operations and maintenance costs, so as only major construction or emergency projects will be covered by federal appropriations.

Alternatively to an endowment, a park site can be authorized to enter into a cooperative agreement with NPS that would authorize official park status and the costs of establishment, needed property acquisition, and management would be borne by non-federal entities.

⁷²³ “Theodore Roosevelt and Conservation,” National Park Service website, accessed September 17, 2013; <http://www.nps.gov/thro/historyculture/theodore-roosevelt-and-conservation.htm> .

HOLD CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTABLE BY
COMMITTING NO FEDERAL FUNDING FOR NEW PARK DESIGNATIONS
UNTIL THE GROWTH IN THE DEFERRED MAINTENANCE BACKLOG IS
ARRESTED

“We are not taking care of the Grand Canyons, the Yellowstone, the Everglades and historic sites such as Independence Hall while we spend hundreds of millions of dollars on what can best be described as local or regional economic development sites...”⁷²⁴

-James Ridenour, former NPS director

Prior to adding any new parks units, we must commit to eradicating the unsustainable maintenance funding trajectory and its \$11.5 billion mountain of delayed repairs. Congress, nor the administration, should authorize any new parks units until there is a budget in place that arrests the quarter-billion dollar annual growth of the deferred maintenance backlog. Moreover, Congress should reform the Antiquities Act to eliminate the authority of the President to unilaterally create a national monument until the deferred maintenance backlog is eliminated.

The \$11.5 billion deferred maintenance backlog in our National Park System serves as a stark reminder of a Congressional failure to properly budget and prioritize spending. Congress and multiple administrations have recognized the deferred maintenance for decades, but have yet to take meaningful corrective action. The fact that Congress fails to provide the \$700 million in annual funds needed to just maintain the NPS at its current condition is inexcusable. After decades of mismanagement, Congress and the administration must finally be held accountable to the 282 million annual visitors to our National Park System.

⁷²⁴ James M. Ridenour, “The National Parks Compromised: Pork Barrel Politics and America’s Treasures,” Ics Books Inc., pages 16 and 17, 1994.

APPENDIX I: METHODOLOGY

The “subsidy per visitor” statistic quoted throughout this report is generated by dividing the fiscal year 2012 annual operating budget for an individual park unit by the reported amount of visitors to the park unit in 2012. For example, if a park accommodated one million visitors in 2012 and had an annual operating budget of \$1 million, the subsidy per visitor would be one dollar. The parks that can be analyzed by the subsidy per visitor metric are limited to the availability of data. Therefore, the statistic can only be calculated for a park unit that has a line item allotment in the annual budget and tracks visitation statistics.

There will be many that dismiss the notion that a park’s value is related to its visitation level or budget. While these are certainly not the sole factors that should be considered when evaluating a site’s historical significance or scenic value, the data set provides a useful metric for policy makers, especially on the basis for a comparative analysis between similarly situated park units.

APPENDIX II: NATIONAL PARK UNITS VISITATION, BUDGET, AND SUBSIDY PER VISITOR IN 2012

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Yukon-Charley Rivers NPRES	1,390	\$1,902	\$1,368.3	\$897,982	Alaska	1978
Rio Grande W&SR	604	\$193	\$319.54	unavailable	Texas	1978
Port Chicago Naval Magazine NM	599	\$177	\$295.49	\$500	California	1992
National Park of American Samoa	6,882	\$1,944	\$282.48	\$728,747	American Samoa	1988
Lake Clark NP & PRES	11,997	\$3,355	\$279.65	\$2,294,556	Alaska	1978
Gates of the Arctic NP & PRES	10,796	\$2,863	\$265.19	\$2,592,160	Alaska	1978
Isle Royale NP	16,746	\$4,349	\$259.70	\$19,632,737	Michigan	1931
Eugene O'Neill NHS	2,815	\$687	\$244.05	\$1,052,506	California	1976
Frederick Law Olmsted NHS	8,011	\$1,773	\$221.32	\$2,603,773	Massachuset ts	1979
Nicodemus NHS	3,313	\$680	\$205.25	\$658,793	Kansas	1996
Sand Creek Massacre NHS	4,294	\$835	\$194.46	\$151,783	Colorado	2000
Salt River Bay NHP & Ecological Pres	5,280	\$796	\$150.76	\$490,546	US Virgin Islands	1992
Fort Union NM	9,145	\$1,221	\$133.52	\$1,001,910	New Mexico	1954
First Ladies NHS	9,063	\$997	\$110.01	\$259,677	Ohio	2000
Katmai NP & PRES#	39,818	\$3,967	\$99.63	\$11,955,894	Alaska	1918
Thomas Stone NHS	6,791	\$618	\$91.00	unavailable	Maryland	1978
Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS	17,489	\$1,489	\$85.14	\$4,583,300	Montana	1972
Springfield Armory NHS	17,197	\$1,463	\$85.07	\$7,916,749	Massachuset ts	1974
Brown v. Board of Education NHS	20,219	\$1,589	\$78.59	\$196,208	Kansas	1992
Agate Fossil Beds NM	11,934	\$923	\$77.34	\$717,943	Nebraska	1965
Saugus Iron Works NHS	11,847	\$885	\$74.70	\$2,194,099	Massachuset ts	1968
Thaddeus Kosciuszko NMEM	2,233	\$162	\$72.55	\$66,135	Pennsylvania	1972
Washita Battlefield NHS	10,563	\$765	\$72.42	\$175,699	Oklahoma	1996
Kalaupapa NHP	58,357	\$4,082	\$69.95	\$17,748,904	Hawaii	1980
Maggie L. Walker NHS	9,222	\$605	\$65.60	\$161,305	Virginia	1978
Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP	32,227	\$2,054	\$63.74	\$2,464,581	Vermont	1992
Fort Union Trading Post NHS	12,999	\$819	\$63.00	\$585,815	North Dakota	1966
Wrangell-St. Elias NP & PRES	87,158	\$5,462	\$62.67	\$22,658,810	Alaska	1978

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Martin Van Buren NHS	21,157	\$1,231	\$58.18	\$2,002,878	New York	1974
Women's Rights NHP	27,534	\$1,545	\$56.11	\$1,429,786	New York	1980
Chaco Culture NHP	38,453	\$2,032	\$52.84	\$9,654,836	New Mexico	1907
Knife River Indian Villages NHS	16,692	\$874	\$52.36	\$59,847	North Dakota	1974
Steamtown NHS	108,072	\$5,624	\$52.04	\$37,607,880	Pennsylvania	1988
Tallgrass Prairie NPRES	18,877	\$967	\$51.23	\$1,352,137	Kansas	1996
Bering Land Bridge NPRES^^	2,642	see footnote	\$51.20	\$2,182,697	Alaska	1978
Kobuk Valley NP^^	11,997	see footnote	\$51.20	unavailable	Alaska	1978
Cape Krusenstern NM^^	24,950	see footnote	\$51.20	unavailable	Alaska	1978
Noatak NPRES^^	31,000	see footnote	\$51.20	unavailable	Alaska	1978
Thomas Edison NHP	56,405	\$2,870	\$50.88	\$10,669,129	New Jersey	1955
Fort Scott NHS	26,079	\$1,321	\$50.65	\$851,705	Kansas	1978
Sagamore Hill NHS	30,974	\$1,528	\$49.33	\$8,453,119	New York	1962
Pecos NHP	44,330	\$2,176	\$49.09	\$7,655,211	New Mexico	1965
Bent's Old Fort NHS	24,982	\$1,198	\$47.95	\$1,421,220	Colorado	1960
George Washington Carver NM	30,858	\$1,465	\$47.48	\$181,821	Missouri	1943
Weir Farm NHS	21,939	\$1,018	\$46.40	\$6,229,956	Connecticut	1990
Salinas Pueblo Missions NM	29,725	\$1,377	\$46.32	\$832,148	New Mexico	1909
Fossil Butte NM	16,862	\$742	\$44.00	\$3,259,176	Wyoming	1972
Cane River Creole NHP	26,579	\$1,135	\$42.70	\$3,768,186	Louisiana	1994
Cumberland Island NS	62,054	\$2,602	\$41.93	\$8,436,460	Georgia	1972
William Howard Taft NHS	19,629	\$816	\$41.57	\$88,883	Ohio	1969
Tuskegee Institute NHS	26,200	\$1,070	\$40.84	\$6,971,983	Alabama	1974
Harry S Truman NHS	32,013	\$1,254	\$39.17	\$1,183,005	Missouri	1983
Hagerman Fossil Beds NM	23,900	\$934	\$39.08	\$615,252	Idaho	1988
Booker T. Washington NM	24,604	\$950	\$38.61	\$602,064	Virginia	1956
Tumacacori NHP	33,529	\$1,277	\$38.09	\$899,601	Arizona	1908
Fort Larned NHS	26,540	\$1,005	\$37.87	\$1,084,064	Kansas	1964
Saratoga NHP	60,838	\$2,241	\$36.84	\$14,016,217	New York	1938
Saint-Gaudens NHS	34,399	\$1,265	\$36.77	\$1,616,766	New Hampshire	1964
Denali NP & PRES	388,705	\$13,881	\$35.71	\$48,677,653	Alaska	1917

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Lyndon B. Johnson NHP	110,907	\$3,894	\$35.11	\$5,095,881	Texas	1969
Fort Davis NHS	37,770	\$1,326	\$35.11	\$2,057,180	Texas	1961
Monocacy NB	43,994	\$1,520	\$34.55	\$3,953,278	Maryland	1976
President W.J. Clinton Birthplace Home NHS	8,894	\$294	\$33.06	\$287,200	Arkansas	2010
Tuskegee Airmen NHS	23,504	\$774	\$32.93	\$1,630,173	Alabama	1998
Hopewell Culture NHP	40,857	\$1,338	\$32.75	\$595,813	Ohio	1933
Ulysses S. Grant NHS	39,662	\$1,263	\$31.84	\$430,632	Missouri	1989
Chiricahua NM	47,665	\$1,734	\$31.17	\$10,107,860	Arizona	1933
Fort Bowie NHS***	7,966	see footnote	\$31.17	\$452,511	Arizona	1964
Hampton NHS	38,527	\$1,199	\$31.12	\$4,872,465	Maryland	1948
Fort Laramie NHS	54,456	\$1,673	\$30.72	\$3,213,151	Wyoming	1938
Dayton Aviation Heritage NHP	66,563	\$1,967	\$29.55	\$596,262	Ohio	1992
Great Basin NP	94,390	\$2,757	\$29.21	\$17,763,531	Nevada	1933
Channel Islands NP	265,746	\$7,547	\$28.40	\$16,781,363	California	1938
Organ Pipe Cactus NM	162,048	\$4,423	\$27.29	\$10,723,382	Arizona	1937
John Muir NHS	37,497	\$1,021	\$27.23	\$1,413,230	California	1964
Dry Tortugas NP	64,231	\$1,730	\$26.93	\$42,986,951	Florida	1935
Aztec Ruins NM	45,002	\$1,208	\$26.84	\$3,531,046	New Mexico	1923
Palo Alto Battlefield NHP	35,500	\$943	\$26.56	\$855,941	Texas	1978
Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt NHS	136,013	\$3,585	\$26.36	\$18,707,828	New York	1944
Redwood NP	341,423	\$8,891	\$26.04	\$42,513,804	California	1968
Hopewell Furnace NHS	54,181	\$1,377	\$25.41	\$8,480,743	Pennsylvania	1938
Harpers Ferry NHP	267,554	\$6,712	\$25.09	\$16,619,960	West Virginia	1944
Golden Spike NHS	43,949	\$1,069	\$24.32	\$7,928,484	Utah	1957
Chamizal NMEM	97,779	\$2,349	\$24.02	\$1,122,671	Texas	1966
Jimmy Carter NHS	69,257	\$1,648	\$23.80	\$1,231,759	Georgia	1987
Longfellow NHS	50,888	\$1,174	\$23.07	\$1,739,812	Massachuset ts	1972
John F. Kennedy NHS	22,153	\$511	\$23.07	\$179,438	Massachuset ts	1967
Edgar Allan Poe NHS	17,347	\$388	\$22.37	\$3,110,126	Pennsylvania	1978
Arkansas Post NMEM	39,823	\$865	\$21.72	\$989,444	Arkansas	1960
Pipe Spring NM	56,838	\$1,229	\$21.62	\$1,456,903	Arizona	1923

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Big Bend NP	325,269	\$6,989	\$21.49	\$86,079,522	Texas	1944
Richmond NBP	149,075	\$3,191	\$21.41	\$15,619,090	Virginia	1936
Hovenweep NM	25,975	\$548	\$21.10	\$1,010,242	Colorado Utah	1923
Bandelier NM	154,536	\$3,233	\$20.92	\$18,862,474	New Mexico	1932
African Burial Ground NM	95,132	\$1,969	\$20.70	\$529,057	New York	2006
Oregon Caves NM	77,966	\$1,544	\$19.80	\$12,872,291	Oregon	1933
Voyageurs NP	215,111	\$4,241	\$19.72	\$12,873,927	Minnesota	1971
Eisenhower NHS	55,650	\$1,092	\$19.62	\$8,129,205	Pennsylvania	1967
Wilson's Creek NB	167,302	\$3,266	\$19.52	\$7,001,472	Missouri	1960
El Morro NM	45,889	\$894	\$19.48	\$2,263,472	New Mexico	1906
Mississippi NRRRA	101,822	\$1,963	\$19.28	\$3,172,492	Minnesota	1988
Russell Cave NM	20,339	\$389	\$19.13	\$723,372	Alabama	1961
Guadalupe Mountains NP	153,778	\$2,915	\$18.96	\$6,496,831	Texas	1966
James A. Garfield NHS	36,943	\$694	\$18.79	\$533,803	Ohio	1980
Andrew Johnson NHS	52,479	\$975	\$18.58	\$1,157,855	Tennessee	1935
Big Thicket NPRES	139,382	\$2,587	\$18.56	\$4,371,296	Texas	1974
Manzanar NHS	72,080	\$1,309	\$18.16	\$5,311,699	California	1992
Saint Paul's Church NHS	15,911	\$286	\$17.97	\$1,427,703	New York	1978
Apostle Islands NL	168,160	\$2,998	\$17.83	\$9,525,931	Wisconsin	1970
Big Hole NB	35,284	\$608	\$17.23	\$2,198,622	Montana	1933
Congaree NP	110,987	\$1,877	\$16.91	\$3,012,981	South Carolina	1976
Friendship Hill NHS	33,794	\$564	\$16.69	\$5,598,996	Pennsylvania	1978
Petersburg NB	204,268	\$3,405	\$16.67	\$11,491,697	Virginia	1933
Navajo NM	65,729	\$1,090	\$16.58	\$2,097,032	Arizona	1909
Saint Croix NSR	236,184	\$3,893	\$16.48	\$1,680,278	WI/MN	1969
Tonto NM	53,039	\$873	\$16.46	\$1,608,965	Arizona	1933
Everglades NP	1,032,987	\$16,953	\$16.41	\$80,341,143	Florida	1934
National Capital Parks East	1,011,705	\$16,451	\$16.26	unavailable	DC/MD	1933
Little Rock Central High School NHS	61,181	\$982	\$16.05	\$54,036	Arkansas	1998
El Malpais NM	110,985	\$1,750	\$15.77	\$1,079,435	New Mexico	1987
Lowell NHP	534,297	\$8,347	\$15.62	\$27,502,749	Massachuset ts	1978

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Coronado NMEM	111,558	\$1,738	\$15.58	\$1,172,784	Arizona	1941
Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural NHS	18,565	\$288	\$15.51	\$767,263	New York	1966
Pinnacles NP	224,288	\$3,473	\$15.48	\$14,404,569	California	1908
Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace NHS	15,407	\$237	\$15.38	\$7,539,896	New York	1962
Capulin Volcano NM	47,726	\$730	\$15.30	\$6,160,852	New Mexico	1916
Gila Cliff Dwellings NM	24,911	\$381	\$15.29	\$3,009,219	New Mexico	1933
Eleanor Roosevelt NHS	54,939	\$838	\$15.25	\$18,575,538	New York	1977
Carlsbad Caverns NP	378,889	\$5,765	\$15.22	\$26,198,937	New Mexico	1923
Niobrara NSR	66,962	\$1,009	\$15.07	\$33,865	Nebraska	1991
Florissant Fossil Beds NM	61,325	\$920	\$15.00	\$2,501,181	Colorado	1969
Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS	140,604	\$2,075	\$14.76	\$10,149,175	Pennsylvania	1964
Petroglyph NM	119,396	\$1,755	\$14.70	\$1,718,499	New Mexico	1990
Effigy Mounds NM	82,112	\$1,187	\$14.46	\$1,323,332	Iowa	1949
Pipestone NM	76,594	\$1,106	\$14.44	\$1,601,313	Minnesota	1937
Christiansted NHS & Buck Island Reef NM	126,962	\$1,832	\$14.43	\$7,666,597	US Virgin Islands	1952
Bighorn Canyon NRA	246,171	\$3,546	\$14.40	\$42,366,965	MT/WY	1964
Grand Portage NM	96,166	\$1,351	\$14.05	\$1,890,798	Minnesota	1951
Whitman Mission NHS	58,023	\$805	\$13.87	\$1,014,040	Washington	1936
Canyonlands NP	460,226	\$6,270	\$13.62	\$26,873,675	Utah	1964
Santa Monica Mountains NRA	633,190	\$8,603	\$13.59	\$6,815,666	California	1978
Kenai Fjords NP	280,933	\$3,809	\$13.56	\$3,955,773	Alaska	1978
Mesa Verde NP	484,568	\$6,474	\$13.36	\$55,696,338	Colorado	1906
Lassen Volcanic NP	397,647	\$5,296	\$13.32	\$30,510,180	California	1916
Horseshoe Bend NMP	60,201	\$795	\$13.21	\$5,493,996	Alabama	1921
Carl Sandburg Home NHS	95,161	\$1,241	\$13.04	\$1,593,419	North Carolina	1968
Catoctin Mountain Park	263,797	\$3,431	\$13.01	\$13,048,391	Maryland	1936
Jean Lafitte NHP & PRES	431,269	\$5,467	\$12.68	\$23,603,186	Louisiana	1933
George Washington Birthplace NM	133,889	\$1,684	\$12.58	\$1,879,167	Virginia	1930
Upper Delaware S&RR	263,254	\$3,311	\$12.58	\$4,761,124	NY/PA	1978
Mammoth Cave NP	507,918	\$6,375	\$12.55	\$81,154,294	Kentucky	1941
Roger Williams NMEM	53,371	\$662	\$12.40	\$1,217,094	Rhode Island	1965

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Fort Smith NHS	87,248	\$1,072	\$12.29	\$3,891,223	AR/OK	1961
Casa Grande Ruins NM	69,539	\$838	\$12.05	\$1,527,220	Arizona	1889
Homestead NM of America	105,259	\$1,265	\$12.02	\$2,306,179	Nebraska	1936
Kaloko Honokohau NHP	157,256	\$1,886	\$11.99	\$1,270,275	Hawaii	1978
Charles Pinckney NHS	45,258	\$537	\$11.87	\$1,086,450	South Carolina	1988
Klondike Gold Rush NHP Seattle	60,667	\$710	\$11.70	unavailable	Washington	1976
Dinosaur NM	293,388	\$3,431	\$11.69	\$43,181,265	Utah/Colora do	1915
Crater Lake NP	456,076	\$5,318	\$11.66	\$93,921,601	Oregon	1902
Andersonville NHS	125,008	\$1,436	\$11.49	\$9,858,619	Georgia	1970
Mount Rainier NP	1,063,272	\$12,168	\$11.44	\$239,037,03 9	Washington	1899
Hubbell Trading Post NHS	77,709	\$880	\$11.32	\$2,262,903	Arizona	1965
Prince William Forest Park	302,241	\$3,385	\$11.20	\$30,139,582	Virginia	1936
Nez Perce NHP	235,256	\$2,568	\$10.92	\$4,009,836	ID/MT/OR/ WA	1965
Jewel Cave NM	109,267	\$1,186	\$10.85	\$767,624	South Dakota	1933
Ocmulgee NM	119,588	\$1,293	\$10.81	\$4,076,226	Georgia	1934
John Day Fossil Beds NM	150,326	\$1,612	\$10.72	\$1,928,335	Oregon	1974
Glacier Bay NP & PRES	454,366	\$4,862	\$10.70	\$15,576,276	Alaska	1925
Natchez NHP	189,570	\$1,999	\$10.54	\$2,951,334	Mississippi	1988
Lava Beds NM	188,488	\$1,981	\$10.51	\$39,340,910	California	1933
Shenandoah NP	1,232,442	\$12,544	\$10.18	\$107,830,69 0	Virginia	1935
Herbert Hoover NHS	136,360	\$1,382	\$10.13	\$4,497,003	Iowa	1965
Padre Island NS	562,411	\$5,698	\$10.13	\$19,667,536	Texas	1962
Sitka NHP	207,095	\$2,067	\$9.98	\$1,857,847	Alaska	1910
Virgin Islands NP	501,566	\$4,959	\$9.89	\$13,211,773	US Virgin Islands	1956
Sequoia NP & Kings Canyon NP	1,697,974	\$16,526	\$9.73	\$202,837,06 4	California	1890
Wolf Trap NP for the Performing Arts	420,862	\$4,080	\$9.69	\$14,459,081	Virginia	1966
Death Valley NP	922,274	\$8,770	\$9.51	\$191,574,153	CA/NV	1933
Lincoln Home NHS	296,301	\$2,808	\$9.48	\$4,183,873	Illinois	1971
Hamilton Grange NMEM	18,486	\$174	\$9.41	\$5,261,217	New York	1962
Wupatki NM****	201,365	see footnote	\$9.37	\$17,316,880	Arizona	1924
Sunset Crater Volcano NM****	177,793	see footnote	\$9.37	\$9,418,705	Arizona	1933

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Fire Island NS	521,318	\$4,869	\$9.34	\$13,667,552	New York	1964
Moore's Creek NB	72,949	\$681	\$9.34	\$3,160,754	North Carolina	1933
Morristown NHP	283,519	\$2,624	\$9.26	\$7,132,809	New Jersey	1933
Mojave NPRES	536,627	\$4,953	\$9.23	\$8,506,640	California	1994
General Grant NMEM	99,294	\$914	\$9.20	\$7,587,692	New York	1958
North Cascades NP^	26,935	see footnote	\$9.10	\$32,045,637	Washington	1968
Lake Chelan NRA^	40,830	see footnote	\$9.10	unavailable	Washington	1968
Ross Lake NRA^	742,200	see footnote	\$9.10	unavailable	Washington	1968
Yellowstone NP	3,890,684	\$35,301	\$9.07	\$616,278,36 3	ID/MT/WY	1872
Timpanogos Cave NM	117,590	\$1,064	\$9.05	\$2,940,080	Utah	1933
Great Sand Dunes NP & PRES	254,635	\$2,286	\$8.98	\$8,348,021	Colorado	1932
Biscayne NP	480,461	\$4,254	\$8.85	\$7,136,766	Florida	1968
Minuteman Missile NHS	74,573	\$656	\$8.80	\$616,652	South Dakota	1999
Pea Ridge NMP	140,037	\$1,223	\$8.73	\$425,256	Arkansas	1956
Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP	190,163	\$1,647	\$8.66	\$5,903,209	Colorado	1933
Fort Caroline NMEM*****	327,339	\$2,770	\$8.46	unavailable	Florida	1950
Lewis & Clark NHP	198,939	\$1,667	\$8.38	\$4,032,098	OR/WA	1958
Fort Stanwix NM	188,585	\$1,572	\$8.34	\$2,573,135	New York	1935
Craters of the Moon NM	196,196	\$1,591	\$8.11	\$8,164,254	Idaho	1924
Big Cypress NPRES	834,253	\$6,674	\$8.00	\$25,143,139	Florida	1974
Perry's Victory & Intl. Peace MEM	141,179	\$1,096	\$7.76	\$43,403,965	Ohio	1936
Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHP	170,299	\$1,319	\$7.75	\$9,839,243	Kentucky	1933
Scotts Bluff NM	126,463	\$975	\$7.71	\$1,698,840	Nebraska	1919
Fort Necessity NB	205,714	\$1,581	\$7.69	\$6,654,982	Pennsylvania	1933
Devils Postpile NM	80,545	\$610	\$7.57	\$1,627,316	California	1933
Adams NHP	323,865	\$2,442	\$7.54	\$612,632	Massachuset ts	1946
Yosemite NP	3,890,684	\$29,007	\$7.46	\$495,216,96 8	California	1890
Big South Fork NRRRA	602,150	\$4,434	\$7.36	\$25,916,042	KY/TN	1974
George Rogers Clark NHP	123,195	\$904	\$7.34	\$6,515,469	Indiana	1966
New Orleans Jazz NHP	175,497	\$1,282	\$7.30	\$2,377,572	Louisiana	1994
Lincoln Boyhood NMEM	135,649	\$980	\$7.22	\$1,419,828	Indiana	1962

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Gauley River NRA	115,218	\$805	\$6.99	\$1,703,145	West Virginia	1988
Pu'ukohola Heiau NHS	138,293	\$966	\$6.99	\$625,197	Hawaii	1972
Little River Canyon NPRES	208,404	\$1,437	\$6.90	\$2,332,895	Alabama	1992
Antietam NB	506,954	\$3,473	\$6.85	\$18,881,698	Maryland	1933
Independence NHP	3,565,991	\$23,897	\$6.70	\$40,084,578	Pennsylvania	1948
New River Gorge NR	1,116,219	\$7,386	\$6.62	\$15,968,829	West Virginia	1978
Ninety Six NHS	70,505	\$463	\$6.57	\$2,471,636	South Carolina	1976
San Antonio Missions NHP	581,805	\$3,797	\$6.53	\$9,537,509	Texas	1978
Johnstown Flood NMEM	124,122	\$808	\$6.51	\$7,150,607	Pennsylvania	1964
Glacier NP	2,160,601	\$13,741	\$6.36	\$266,500,13 2	Montana	1910
Lake Meredith NRA	502,457	\$3,103	\$6.18	\$18,578,942	Texas	1965
War in the Pacific NHP	254,294	\$1,546	\$6.08	\$4,948,799	Guam	1978
Natural Bridges NM	87,755	\$527	\$6.01	\$8,253,341	Utah	1908
Gettysburg NMP	1,162,715	\$6,825	\$5.87	\$49,864,577	Pennsylvania	1933
Federal Hall NMEM	187,802	\$1,100	\$5.86	\$2,998,619	New York	1939
Martin Luther King, Jr. NHS	703,604	\$4,111	\$5.84	\$4,014,568	Georgia	1980
Missouri NRR	152,122	\$867	\$5.70	\$426,776	NE/SD	1978
Saguaro NP	637,171	\$3,621	\$5.68	\$12,634,084	Arizona	1933
River Raisin NBP	52,027	\$294	\$5.65	\$875,553	Michigan	2009
Appomattox Court House NHP	317,427	\$1,777	\$5.60	\$4,748,647	Virginia	1933
Vicksburg NMP	566,958	\$3,085	\$5.44	\$5,134,517	MS/LA	1933
Whiskeytown NRA	814,294	\$4,350	\$5.34	\$32,877,562	California	1965
Stones River NB	241,386	\$1,283	\$5.32	\$5,318,146	Tennessee	1933
Glen Canyon NRA	2,065,060	\$10,941	\$5.30	\$94,782,704	Utah/Arizona	1958
Petrified Forest NP	651,758	\$3,447	\$5.29	\$52,563,252	Arizona	1962
Cape Lookout NS	473,985	\$2,487	\$5.25	\$6,739,236	North Carolina	1966
Hawaii Volcanoes NP	1,408,515	\$7,355	\$5.22	\$102,987,41 0	Hawaii	1916
Manassas NBP	603,896	\$3,101	\$5.13	\$5,562,106	Virginia	1940
Haleakala NP	1,066,983	\$5,371	\$5.03	\$20,797,240	Hawaii	1916
Indiana Dunes NL	1,819,636	\$9,086	\$4.99	\$21,705,467	Indiana	1966
Wind Cave NP	525,425	\$2,620	\$4.99	\$6,773,990	South Dakota	1903

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Obed W&SR	209,548	\$1,035	\$4.94	\$408,796	Tennessee	1976
Buffalo NR	1,176,893	\$5,812	\$4.94	\$12,177,581	Arkansas	1972
Badlands NP	883,308	\$4,337	\$4.91	\$31,340,638	South Dakota	1929
Grand Canyon NP	4,358,215	\$21,363	\$4.90	\$405,617,85 4	Arizona	1908
Grand Teton NP	2,677,385	\$12,630	\$4.72	\$221,701,270	Wyoming	1929
Ozark NSR	1,400,981	\$6,583	\$4.70	\$34,447,795	Missouri	1964
Cuyahoga Valley NP	2,327,771	\$10,877	\$4.67	\$33,038,069	Ohio	1974
Fort Donelson NB	317,798	\$1,474	\$4.64	\$5,174,866	TN/KY	1933
Theodore Roosevelt NP	619,744	\$2,870	\$4.63	\$10,241,021	North Dakota	1947
City of Rocks NRES	99,822	\$459	\$4.60	\$526,258	Idaho	1988
Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania NMP	962,449	\$4,417	\$4.59	\$14,545,224	Virginia	1933
Curecanti NRA	872,214	\$3,986	\$4.57	\$15,313,067	Colorado	1965
Olympic NP	2,854,432	\$12,874	\$4.51	\$127,835,610	Washington	1933
Joshua Tree NP	1,368,822	\$6,137	\$4.48	\$90,430,109	California	1936
Kings Mountain NMP	266,514	\$1,155	\$4.33	\$4,761,581	South Carolina	1933
Rock Creek Park	2,039,016	\$8,814	\$4.32	\$37,018,292	Washington DC	1975
Pictured Rocks NL	615,485	\$2,641	\$4.29	\$5,529,729	Michigan	1966
Pu'uhonua o Honaunau NHP	442,182	\$1,878	\$4.25	\$1,455,070	Hawaii	1955
Governors Island NM	345,928	\$1,462	\$4.23	\$7,901,620	New York	2001
Cumberland Gap NHP	837,484	\$3,513	\$4.19	\$15,105,880	KY/TN/VA	1940
Cape Hatteras NS*	2,302,040	\$9,609	\$4.17	\$49,356,279	North Carolina	1937
Valley Forge NHP	1,516,660	\$6,270	\$4.13	\$29,111,147	Pennsylvania	1976
Statue of Liberty NM	3,799,090	\$15,700	\$4.13	\$266,680,18 1	NY/NJ	1933
Shiloh NMP	584,652	\$2,382	\$4.07	\$6,939,423	Tennessee	1933
Jefferson Nat Expansion Mem	2,488,010	\$9,947	\$4.00	\$20,669,929	Missouri	1935
Colorado NM	471,005	\$1,879	\$3.99	\$15,966,530	Colorado	1911
Gateway NRA	6,498,008	\$25,282	\$3.89	\$682,536,75 8	NY/NJ	1972
Rocky Mountain NP	3,243,623	\$12,560	\$3.87	\$91,421,800	Colorado	1915
San Juan Island NHP	263,279	\$1,006	\$3.82	\$6,657,258	Washington	1966
Lake Roosevelt NRA	1,531,994	\$5,755	\$3.76	\$23,830,240	Washington	1946
Cowpens NB	226,955	\$835	\$3.68	\$1,271,826	South Carolina	1933

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Boston NHP	2,644,465	\$9,665	\$3.65	\$98,320,310	Massachusetts	1974
White Sands NM	445,470	\$1,589	\$3.57	\$3,499,649	New Mexico	1933
Little Bighorn Battlefield NM	346,806	\$1,231	\$3.55	\$16,909,828	Montana	1940
Klondike Gold Rush NHP Alaska	854,117	\$2,998	\$3.51	\$7,873,711	Alaska	1976
Hot Springs NP	1,313,036	\$4,599	\$3.50	\$10,975,316	Arkansas	1921
Salem Maritime NHS	725,372	\$2,536	\$3.50	\$3,998,613	Massachusetts	1938
Fort Pulaski NM	395,690	\$1,370	\$3.46	\$16,295,682	Georgia	1933
Guilford Courthouse NMP	320,969	\$1,104	\$3.44	\$737,389	North Carolina	1933
Fort McHenry NM & HS	736,065	\$2,529	\$3.44	\$3,558,120	Maryland	1933
Capitol Reef NP	661,188	\$2,246	\$3.40	\$8,578,408	Utah	1937
New Bedford Whaling NHP	272,690	\$924	\$3.39	\$853,458	Massachusetts	1996
Chickamauga & Chattanooga NMP	1,018,171	\$3,383	\$3.32	\$66,949,171	GA/TN	1933
Acadia NP	2,394,440	\$7,866	\$3.29	\$72,185,313	Maine	1919
Devils Tower NM	415,153	\$1,347	\$3.24	\$4,251,498	Wyoming	1906
Point Reyes NS	2,324,793	\$7,535	\$3.24	\$101,702,124	California	1962
Wright Brothers NMEM*	466,816	see footnote	\$3.15	unavailable	North Carolina	1933
Fort Raleigh NHS*	281,833	see footnote	\$3.15	unavailable	North Carolina	1941
Canaveral NS	1,007,525	\$3,165	\$3.14	\$20,858,201	Florida	1975
Flight 93 NMEM	336,730	\$1,055	\$3.13	\$932,322	Pennsylvania	2002
Fort Frederica NM	277,944	\$864	\$3.11	\$907,045	Georgia	1936
Amistad NRA	1,339,029	\$3,964	\$2.96	\$9,679,816	Texas	1965
Lake Mead NRA	6,275,299	\$17,908	\$2.85	\$290,882,554	NV/AZ	1936
Montezuma Castle NM	577,781	\$1,636	\$2.83	\$3,875,373	Arizona	1906
Chickasaw NRA	1,360,453	\$3,813	\$2.80	\$29,490,798	Oklahoma	1902
Minute Man NHP	1,010,344	\$2,766	\$2.74	\$11,555,301	Massachusetts	1959
Sleeping Bear Dunes NL	1,566,176	\$4,275	\$2.73	\$16,676,449	Michigan	1970
San Juan NHS	1,274,838	\$3,460	\$2.71	\$326,393,943	Puerto Rico	1949
Zion NP	2,981,863	\$7,708	\$2.58	\$59,624,435	Utah	1919
Fort Sumter NM	851,556	\$2,153	\$2.53	\$23,229,203	South Carolina	1948
Vanderbilt Mansion NHS	424,764	\$1,067	\$2.51	\$35,279,965	New York	1940
Fort Vancouver NHS	673,481	\$1,684	\$2.50	\$22,589,020	WA/OR	1948

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Assateague Island NS	2,192,098	\$5,304	\$2.42	\$35,201,581	MD/VA	1965
Canyon de Chelly NM	829,043	\$1,986	\$2.40	\$14,181,105	Arizona	1931
Bryce Canyon NP	1,375,278	\$3,268	\$2.38	\$33,753,403	Utah	1923
Chesapeake & Ohio Canal NHP	4,586,505	\$10,152	\$2.21	\$116,727,982	DC/MD/WV	1961
Natchez Trace Parkway, Brices Cross Roads NBS, Tupelo NB, Natchez Trace NST	5,531,269	\$11,508	\$2.08	\$327,737,217	MS/AL/TN	1938
Bluestone NSR	36,841	\$75	\$2.04	\$60,247	West Virginia	1988
World War II Valor in the Pacific NM	1,753,024	\$3,529	\$2.01	\$3,207,198	HI/CA/AK	1980
Colonial NHP	3,377,135	\$6,785	\$2.01	\$192,741,964	Virginia	1931
Great Smoky Mountains NP	9,648,269	\$19,023	\$1.97	\$290,109,337	NC/TN	1934
Timucuan EHP*****	1,076,310	see footnote	\$1.97	\$2,915,551	Florida	1988
Boston African American NHS	400,671	\$785	\$1.96	unavailable	Massachuset ts	1980
Cabrillo NM	871,081	\$1,686	\$1.94	\$3,527,245	California	1933
Delaware Water Gap NRA	4,986,384	\$9,536	\$1.91	\$166,126,353	NJ/PA	1965
Mount Rushmore NMEM	2,189,349	\$4,054	\$1.85	\$6,584,706	South Dakota	1925
Arches NP	1,058,948	\$1,917	\$1.81	\$18,104,605	Utah	1929
George Washington MEM PKWY	7,362,680	\$13,117	\$1.78	\$86,044,153	VA/MD/DC	1933
San Francisco Maritime NHP	4,212,972	\$7,407	\$1.76	\$111,291,997	California	1988
Golden Gate NRA	14,805,627	\$25,559	\$1.73	\$262,719,151	California	1972
Castillo de San Marcos NM**	727,243	\$2,108	\$1.72	\$5,185,869	Florida	1933
Fort Matanzas NM**	497,574	see footnote	\$1.72	unavailable	Florida	1933
Cape Cod NS	4,471,142	\$7,580	\$1.70	\$43,304,196	Massachuset ts	1961
De Soto NMEM	471,610	\$709	\$1.50	\$209,750	Florida	1948
Rainbow Bridge NM	75,304	\$111	\$1.47	\$874,716	Utah	1910
Gulf Islands NS	5,229,026	\$7,227	\$1.38	unavailable	FL/MS	1971
National Mall & Memorial Parks	29,721,005	\$33,877	\$1.14	unavailable	Washington DC	1933
Chattahoochee River NRA	3,184,204	\$3,349	\$1.05	\$17,133,007	Georgia	1978
Cedar Breaks NM	650,030	\$683	\$1.05	\$5,972,331	Utah	1933
Blue Ridge PKWY	15,566,678	\$15,806	\$1.02	\$529,971,967	VA/NC	1936
Kennesaw Mountain NBP	1,931,420	\$1,677	\$0.87	\$2,809,124	Georgia	1933
Muir Woods NM	977,042	\$446	\$0.46	\$8,295,976	California	1908

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
John D. Rockefeller, Jr. MEM PKWY	1,196,656	\$520	\$0.43	\$5,848,754	Wyoming	1972
Fort Point NHS	1,391,266	\$531	\$0.38	\$8,649,195	California	1970
Castle Clinton NM	4,109,817	\$618	\$0.15	\$6,398,970	New York	1946
Appalachian NST	not tracked	\$1,538	N/A	\$32,085,144	Maine- Georgia	1968
Minidoka NHS	not tracked	\$438	N/A	\$3,851,587	Idaho	2001
Ford's Theatre NHS	719,215	National Mall	N/A	\$1,874,638	Washington DC	1932
Arlington House The R.E. Lee MEM	557,155	unavailab le	N/A	unavailable	Virginia	1933
Greenbelt Park	149,227	Capital Parks- East	N/A	unavailable	Maryland	1950
Piscataway Park	145,412	Capital Parks- East	N/A	unavailable	Maryland	1961
Frederick Douglass NHS	54,353	Capital Parks- East	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1962
Alibates Flint Quarries NM	11,824	unavailab le	N/A	\$1,500,868	Texas	1965
Pennsylvania Avenue NHS	283,232	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1965
Theodore Roosevelt Island	619,744	unavailab le	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1970
Clara Barton NHS	24,851	unavailab le	N/A	unavailable	Maryland	1974
Fort Washington Park	335,428	Capital Parks- East	N/A	unavailable	Maryland	1975
Mary McLeod Bethune Council House NHS	13,916	Capital Parks- East	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1991
World War II Memorial	4,161,685	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1994
President's Park	743,209	unavailab le	N/A	\$4,425,679	Washington DC	
Walnut Canyon NM	110,748	unavailab le	N/A	\$5,360,375	Arizona	1933
White House	656,949	unavailab le	N/A	\$4,425,679	Washington DC	1933
Washington Monument	o	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1933
Lincoln Memorial	6,191,361	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1933
Thomas Jefferson MEM	2,613,131	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1934
Tuzigoot NM	97,388	unavailab le	N/A	\$3,670,785	Arizona	1939
Saint Croix Island IHS	not tracked	\$229	N/A	\$416,236	ME/New Brunswick	1949
Buck Island Reef NM	30,436	unavailab le	N/A	\$248,839	US Virgin Islands	1961
Hohokam Pima NM	o	Case Grande Ruins	N/A	unavailable	Arizona	1972
LBJ Memorial Grove on the Potomac	371,063	unavailab le	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1975

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
Constitution Gardens	not tracked	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1978
Vietnam Veterans MEM	4,424,407	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1980
Potomac Heritage NST	not tracked	\$392	N/A	unavailable	VA/MD/DC/ PA	1983
Poverty Point NM	not tracked	unavailab le	N/A	unavailable	Louisiana	1988
Keweenaw NHP	not tracked	\$1,488	N/A	\$10,837,721	Michigan	1992
Ebey's Landing NHR	not tracked	\$348	N/A	\$3,673,248	Washington	1992
Great Egg Harbor NS&RR	not tracked	unavailab le	N/A	unavailable	NJ/PA	1992
Korean War Veterans Memorial	3,267,124	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1995
Boston Harbor Islands NRA	not tracked	\$1,181	N/A	\$29,560,631	Massachuset ts	1996
Franklin Delano Roosevelt MEM	2,764,459	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1997
Rosie the Riveter WWII Home Front NHP	not tracked	\$1,299	N/A	unavailable	California	2000
Virgin Islands Coral Reef NM	not tracked	\$452	N/A	unavailable	US Virgin Islands	2001
Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP	not tracked	\$882	N/A	\$436,424	Virginia	2002
Ronald Reagan Boyhood Homes NHS	not tracked	\$72	N/A	unavailable	Illinois	2002
Fort Monroe NM	not tracked	\$350	N/A	unavailable	Virginia	2011
Paterson Great Falls NHP	not tracked	\$350	N/A	unavailable	New Jersey	2011
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial	3,738,336	National Mall	N/A	unavailable	Washington DC	1996 /2011
Baltimore-Washington Parkway	not tracked	Capital Parks- East	N/A	\$162,410,88 0	MD/DC	
Aniakchak NM&PRES#	19	see footnote	N/A	\$2,935	Alaska	1978
Yucca House NM	Not tracked	\$104	N/A	Unavailable	Colorado	1919
Carter G Woodson NHS	0	\$52	N/A	Unavailable	Washington DC	2003

Multiple parks that share a budget

*Cape Hatteras Group		\$9,609				
**Castillo de San Marcos NM & Fort Matanzas NM		\$2,108				
***Chiricahua NM & Fort Bowie NHS		\$1,734				
****Flagstaff Area Parks		\$3,551				
*****Fort Caroline NMem & Timucuan EHP		\$2,770				
#Katmai NP&Pres, Aniakchak NM&Pres & Alagnak WR		\$3,967				
^North Cascades NP, Lake Chelan NRA, Ross		\$7,365				

Park Unit	Visitation 2012	FY2012 Budget (\$000)	Subsidy per visitor 2012	Maintenance Backlog 2012	State	Est.
<hr/>						
Lake NRA						
<hr/>						
^^Western Arctic National Parklands		\$3,702				